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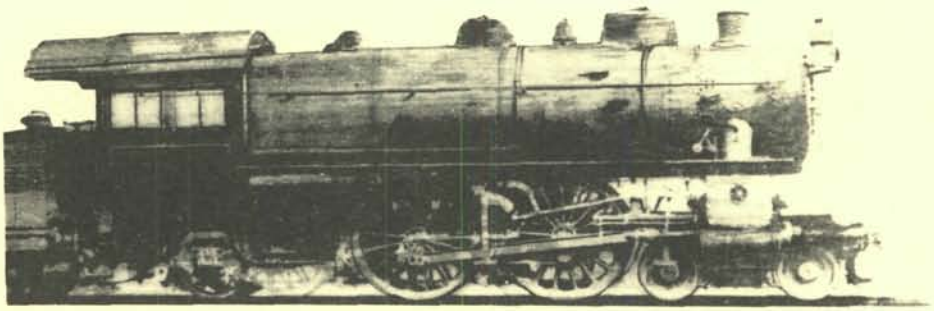

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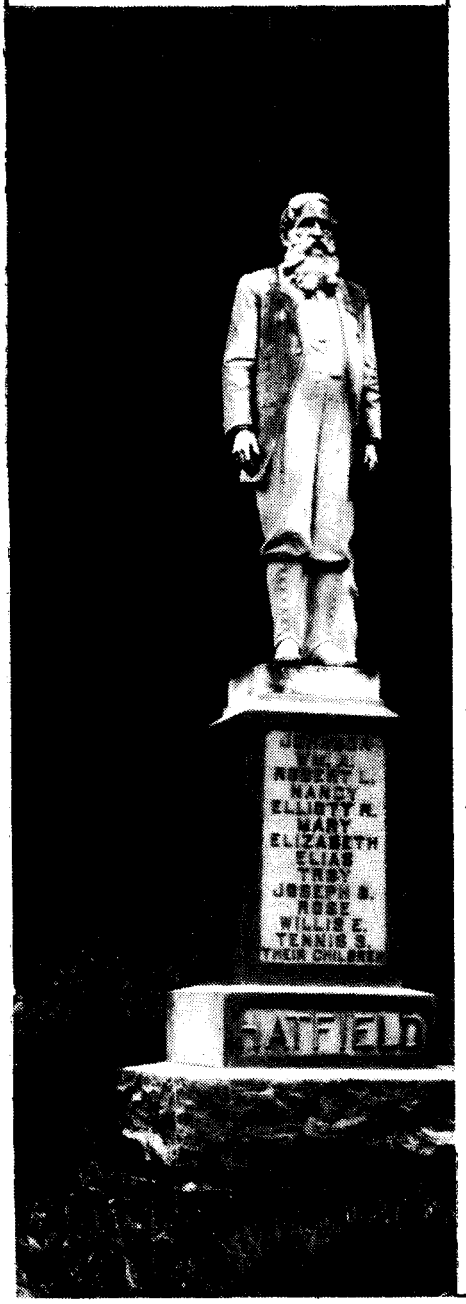

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Out of My Mind

A Child's Garden of Science

JEREMY BERNSTEIN

Over a two-year period from 1973 to 1975, I conducted a series of interviews with the Nobel-Prize-winning physicist I. I. Rabi, which culminated in a *New Yorker* profile that was published in October 1975. Rabi, who was born on July 29, 1898, in Galicia, was then in his midseventies. He was, and is, one of the wisest people I have ever known. One of the things that we discussed was the aging process in scientists. It is a cliché that the great scientists appear to do their best work when they are extremely young and that many scientists seem to burn out by the time they are fifty or even earlier. I asked Rabi why he thought this was, and here is his answer:

> I think it must be basically neurological or physiological. The mind ceases to operate with the same richness and associations. The information-retrieval part sort of goes, along with the interconnections. I know that when I was in my late teens and early twenties the world was just a Roman candle—rockets all the time. The world was aglow. You lose that sort of thing as time goes on. It's the sort of thing that you want to hang on to if you can. And physics is such an out-of-the-world thing. It's not like history or poetry, or even painting. In them you never really lose contact with the world—it's right there before you. But physics is an otherworldly thing. It requires a taste for things unseen, even unheard of—a high degree of abstraction and a sort of profound innate philosophy. These faculties die off somehow when you grow up. You see them in children, who are fantastically interested in making things and in asking "Why? Why? Why?" Then, at a certain age, the children just become adults and are no longer very deeply interested in anything, except in the process of making a living and in sex and power. Money. Otherwise, they're not terribly interested. Profound curiosity happens when they are young. I think physicists are the Peter Pans of the human race. They never grow up, and they keep their curiosity.

The phrase "physicists [and for "physicists" one can substitute, I think, "scientists"] are the Peter Pans of the human race" has haunted me ever since I first heard it from Rabi. I believe that it is true, but it raises another question—the question that is the subject of this essay—namely, why is it that certain children become scientists? What is the triggering mechanism in childhood that starts some child on the road to where he, or she, becomes an Einstein, a Feynman, or a Rabi? In short, if one looks at the lives of scientists, what was the first childhood experience that they themselves can connect to what they later became? There is, very likely, an enormous literature on this subject, of which I am blissfully ignorant. But what I have been doing for the past twenty years is to ask many of the scientists I have interviewed just this question and, where, as in the case of Einstein, I had no opportunity to ask this question myself, I have tried to find out the answer by reading autobiographical statements. This has led me to read the first chapters of an awful lot of autobiographies.

One conclusion that I have come to is that there appears to be a clear distinction between mathematically oriented scientists and the rest. The triggering experiences of, say, experimental physicists are so diverse that they do not seem to fall into any obvious pattern. I will give a few examples later. But of mathematicians, there seems to be a universal law that I can summarize with a slight distortion of that celebrated bit of dialogue from *Die Fledermaus*. My version reads, "So young and already a mathematician." (The late Wolfgang Pauli—a Viennese noted for his

JEREMY BERNSTEIN's latest book is *Science Observed*. He is currently working on a profile of the Bell Laboratories.

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acerbic wit, which was often applied to his fellow physicists—once remarked apropos of one of them, "So young and already so unknown." The original, in case one has not heard it recently, was "So jung und schon ein Prinz.") I really believe, having observed a good deal of it, that mathematical genius—even high talent—is "hard-wired." I do not have the foggiest idea where in the brain, or how, this hardware is hooked up—after all, brain scientists do not even know where, if anywhere, in the brain memory is located. But I am quite sure that it is there. We can all learn algebra, and many of us can learn calculus, but we cannot be taught to be Euler, Gauss, or Von Neumann. Even *they* cannot be taught to be Euler, Gauss, or Von Neumann.

Let me give a few examples of early mathematical experience that involve people I have spoken to myself. Hans Bethe, one of the premier contemporary mathematical physicists, when I asked him if he had any early mathematical memories, answered, "Oh yes—many. I was interested in numbers from a very early age. When I was five, I said to my mother on a walk one day, 'Isn't it strange that if a zero comes at the end of a number it means a lot but if it is at the beginning of a number it doesn't mean anything?' And one day when I was about four, Richard Ewald, a professor of physiology, who was my father's boss, asked me on the street, 'What is .5 divided by 2?' I answered, 'Dear Uncle Ewald, that I don't know,' but the next time I saw him I ran to him and said, 'Uncle Ewald, it's .25.' I knew about decimals then. When I was seven I learned about powers, and filled a whole book with the powers of two or three."

I not long ago asked the same question of Stanislaw Ulam. Ulam, who was born in Poland in 1909 and who has recently retired from Los Alamos, is the very distinguished mathematician who, among many other things, invented what is called the "Monte Carlo method" of doing approximate numerical calculations. (Ulam, along with Edward Teller, discovered what is known as the "secret of the hydrogen bomb.") He told me that when he was about ten he began attending lectures on the theory of relativity. In his delightful book *Adventures of a Mathematician*, he writes, "I did not really understand any of the details, but I had a good idea of the main thrust of the theory. Almost like learning a language in childhood, one develops the ability to speak it without knowing anything about grammar." (There is a school of thought, as is well known, that claims, and I think correctly, that grammar is also "hard-wired"; but that is a subject for another essay.) Ulam concluded: "I understood the schema of special relativity and even some of the consequences without being able to verify the details mathematically."

A little later in this chapter of his book Ulam writes: "I had mathematical curiosity very early. My father had in his library a wonderful series of German paperback books—*Reklam*, they were called. One was Euler's *Algebra*. I looked at it when I was perhaps ten or eleven, and it gave me a mysterious feeling. The symbols looked like magic signs; I wondered whether one day I could understand them. This probably contributed to the development of my mathematical curiosity. I discovered by myself how to solve quadratic equations. I remember that I did this by an incredible concentration and almost painful and not-quite conscious effort. What I did amounted to completing the square in my head without paper or pencil."

The computer scientist and artificial-intelligence expert Marvin Minsky told me that many of his earliest memories are mathematical. At some very young age he learned that there were both positive and negative numbers. "I thought to myself," he said, "that is very nice, but maybe there are three kinds of numbers—a, b and c. I tried for days to find a number system with three bases that looked like arithmetic. Many years later I realized that there isn't one. At the time I didn't have the courage to add a fourth base number that works and gives you the complex number system."

I once asked Freeman Dyson if he could recall *his* earliest mathematical memories. He told me that, among them, was a time when he was still being put down for naps in the afternoon—he was not exactly sure of the age, but less than ten—he began adding up numbers like $1+\frac{1}{2}+\frac{1}{4}+\frac{1}{8}+\ldots$ and realized that this series was adding up to 2. In other words, he had discovered for himself the notion of the convergent infinite series.

To these examples I would like to add a few more that I have culled from various biographies and autobiographies. Emilio Segrè

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wrote a lovely biography of his lifelong friend and colleague Fermi, called *Enrico Fermi, Physicist.* Early in the book, Segrè writes: "Fermi never told me how he first became acquainted with mathematics; it is possible that a friend of his father introduced him to the subject. . . . Fermi told me that one of his great intellectual efforts was his attempt to understand—at the age of ten—what was meant by the statement that the equation $x^2 + y^2 = r^2$ represents a circle. Someone must have stated the fact to him, but he had to rediscover its meaning by himself."

Recently I heard an interview that Richard Feynman, perhaps the most brilliant theoretical physicist of his generation, gave on "Nova." He was asked about his earliest memories. He replied, "When I was just a little kid, very small in a high chair, [my father] brought home a lot of tiles, little bathroom tiles—seconds of different colors. . . . We played with them, setting them out like dominoes, I mean vertically, on my high chair . . . so they tell me this anyway . . . and when we'd got them all set up I would push one end so that they would all go down. Then after a while I'd help to set them up in a more complicated way . . . two white tiles and a blue tile, two white tiles and a blue tile . . . and when my mother complained 'Leave the poor child alone, if he wants to put a blue tile, let him put a blue tile,' he said, 'No, I want to show him what patterns are like and how interesting they are as it's a kind of mathematics.' " And so it is.

Einstein never thought of himself as much of a mathematician, although, by almost any standards, he was as powerful a mathematician as he needed to be when it came time to invent the general theory of relativity. Einstein created, or re-created, the so-called "tensor calculus," a highly non-trivial affair. But the earliest scientific memory that he recalls, for the purpose of his wonderful "Autobiographical Notes," was not mathematical at all. When he was four or five years old he remembers being shown a compass. He was fascinated by the way the compass needle behaved, especially that it pointed north. He wrote, "That this needle behaved in such a determined way did not at all fit into the nature of events, which could find a place in the unconscious world of concepts (effect connected with direct 'touch'). I can still remember—or at least I believe I can remember—that this experience made a deep and lasting impression upon me. Something deeply hidden had to be behind things."

This sort of trigger experience—the experience of wanting to know how something mechanical or electrical actually works, often to the point of wanting to re-create it by building it oneself is, as far as I can make out, the characteristic of the less mathematically inclined scientists. Many scientists, of course, and Einstein is one, have both sorts of early memory. (Einstein invented a proof of the Pythagorean theorem by himself when he was twelve.) It is interesting to me that the nonmathematical trigger experience of Einstein involved magnetism, since electromagnetism was to play so important a part in his early creative life. I was also interested to learn that Ernst Mach, whose great book *The Science of Mechanics* (1893) had such an influence on the young Einstein, had a triggering experience that was mechanical. (By his own admission Mach was never much of a mathematician.) This is the story as recounted in John T. Blackmore's biography *Ernst Mach.*

> There was a turning point in my fifth year. Up to that time I represented to myself everything I did not understand—a pianoforte, for instance—as simply a motley assemblage of the most wonderful things, to which I ascribed the sound of the notes. That the pressed key struck the chord with the hammer did not occur to me. Then one day I saw a windmill.
>
> We [Ernst and his sister Octavia] had to bring a message to the miller. Upon our arrival the mill had just begun to work. The terrible noise frightened me, but did not hinder me from watching the teeth of the shaft which meshed with the gear of the grinding mechanism and moved on one tooth after another. This sight remained until I reached a more mature level, and in my opinion, raised my childlike thinking from the level of the wonder-believing savage to causal thinking; from now on, in order to understand the unintelligible, I no longer imagined magic things in the background but traced in a broken toy the cord or lever which had caused the effect.

Before I comment on this passage, I would like to give one more example, and this from Isaac Newton. As far as I know, it is not known what Newton's first scientific intimations were. I am not aware, for example, that he showed any special fascination for numbers

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when he was a child, although in adult life, as we all know, he became a prodigious mathematician. One of Newton's younger contemporaries, William Stukeley, collected information about Newton that he published in a memoir. He, like Newton, was from Lincolnshire, and in the preparation of his memoir, published in 1752, twenty-five years after Newton's death, he visited Newton's boyhood home, including the study where Newton did his great work when he came down from Cambridge in the plague year of 1665. Stukeley reports in his memoir:

> Every one that knew Sir Isaac, or have heard of him, recount the pregnancy of his parts when a boy, his strange inventions, and extraordinary inclination for mechanics. That instead of playing among the other boys, when from school, he always busied himself in making knick-knacks and models of wood in many kinds. For which purposes he had got little saws, hatchets, hammers, and a whole shop of tools, which he would use with great dexterity. In particular they speak of his making a wooden clock. About this time a new windmill [shades of Mach] was set up near Grantham, in the way to Gunnerby, which is now demolished, this country chiefly using water mills. Our lad's imitating spirit was soon excited, and by frequently prying into the fabric of it, as they were making it, he became master enough to make a very perfect model thereof, and it was said to be as clean and curious a piece of workmanship as the original. This sometimes he would set upon the house-top where he lodged, and clothing it with sail-cloth, the wind would really take it; but what was most extraordinary in its composition was, that he put a mouse into it, which he called the miller, and that mouse made the mill turn round when he pleased.

So young and already a mechanic.

What are we to make of all of this? It would appear that all children, to various degrees and with various aptitudes, go through this "scientific phase," but that very few of them become scientists. The reasons for the latter are clearly many, not the least of which have to do with environmental opportunities. An Isaac Newton born in a mountain village in Nepal might well have grown up to be the village curiosity, or even a great religious figure, but would, one can safely assume, be unlikely to have invented the law of universal gravitation. But many children are exposed to similar environments, and some of them grow up to rob banks and some to own them.

Perhaps some clue about what makes certain children scientists is to be found in the quotation from Mach. He had, he tells us, this sudden realization as a child that causal explanation could make the unintelligible understandable. In his "Autobiographical Notes" Einstein describes the tension created when some experience causes us, quite spontaneously, to "wonder" about its meaning and cause. He speaks of this as a "conflict" and he writes, "Whenever such a conflict is experienced hard and intensively it reacts back upon our thought world in a decisive way. The development of this thought world is in a certain sense a continuous flight from 'wonder.' "

"Flight" here is a very strong word. It suggests, at least to me, that these scientific children learn very early that causal explanation is a great aid and comfort in the constant flight we all make from the unintelligible. Causal explanation helps us to flee from the terrors of the unknown, and these terrors can loom very large in the mind of a child. In this respect, here is what Rabi told me when I asked him if some childhood experience turned him toward science: "Yes," he said, "a very profound one. One time, I was walking down the street—looked right down the street, which faced east. The moon was just rising. And it scared the hell out of me! Absolutely scared the hell out of me." Not long afterward Rabi began reading through—in alphabetical order—all of the books in the children's section of the Brooklyn Public Library branch that was near his home. First he began with fiction, reading from Alcott through Trowbridge. Then he came to the science shelf and began with astronomy—a little book on astronomy—which changed his life. It was his first encounter with scientific explanation and, as he told me, "When you have the astronomical explanation, the rising of the moon becomes a sort of non-event."

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Life and Letters . . . . . .

Work and Its Contents

ARISTIDES

"Comes another Depression," said my father, as he noted the patch of grass I missed in the center of our small back lawn, the weeds I forgot to pull up next to the fence, and the uneven edges I left along the pavement, "it's guys like you they fire first." I haven't yet been fired, but then neither have we had a major Depression. "If you work for a man for a dollar an hour," my father used to say, "always give that man at least a dollar and a quarter of effort." But my first job, at age thirteen, was that of a delivery and stock boy at Sanders Pharmacy and paid sixty cents an hour and was so excruciatingly boring—I mostly dusted bottles—that my problem was how to find a way to give Mr. Sanders even twenty cents an hour in honest effort.

When I was growing up my father gave me a good deal of advice about work that I could neither use nor quite shake off. But, then, what you have to know about my father is that he himself was a Herculean worker, a six-day-a-week, never-look-at-the-clock man until his recent retirement at seventy-five. Perhaps an anecdote will give you something of the flavor of his work habits. My father once told me, in complaint about a man who worked for him, that for fifteen years this man had come to work at 8:30 on the dot, which was the precise time his business opened. "You would think that once," my father said, "just once he would be early." "Dad," I said, "please don't tell that story to anyone else." But now I see that I have told it for him.

My father also used to say, over and over as it seemed to me then, "If you don't like your work, you're in real trouble." He began to tell me this when I was perhaps eleven or twelve, and I only came to know it was true when I was in my late twenties. Until then, work was work, a necessary evil, though not so evil as all that, something to fill the hours between sleeping and enjoying myself. "Work is the curse of the drinking classes," said Oscar Wilde, which is a remark I would once have found more amusing than I do now. Today I must own that I subscribe to the less witty, indeed not witty at all, but vaguely moralizing strain of Thomas Carlyle, who in *Past and Present* wrote: "Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness." If I did needlepoint, I should stitch that on my pillowcase and sleep on it, exhausted after a good day's work.

Not everyone, I realize, shares this taste for work. Far from it—so far that I sometimes think that the world is divided between those who work so they can live and those who live chiefly so they can work. I make this sound more black-and-white, either-or, one-way-or-the-other than it truly is. But the fact is, in my experience, some of the most forlorn people I know are those who haven't found their work: people of artistic temperament who have no art to practice, leaders without followers, serious men and women with nothing serious to do. On the other side, people who have found their work can seem, while at work, creatures of great dignity, even beauty. "A man blowing a trumpet successfully is a rousing spectacle," noted the Welsh writer Rhys Davies in one of his short stories. And so, too, is a man or woman working at anything he or she loves.

Contemporary novelists have tended to banish the subject of work from their books, though work, both in its dreary and in its glorious aspects, has been of great significance in so many novels of the past. One thinks of poor Oliver Twist slaving away at the blacking factory; of Clyde Griffiths, his head full of dreams, working as a bellboy in Kansas City and on the assembly line at his uncle's shirt-collar factory in Lycurgus, New York; of the figure of Levin, in *Anna Karenina*,

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sweating joyously as he works in the fields with his peasants, stopping from time to time under the blazing sun for a swig of kvass; of the seamen in so many tales and novels of Melville and Conrad going about doing ship's work—scrubbing down the decks, lashing up the mizzenmast—and working together to fight off typhoons and other seagoing disasters. And finally one thinks of prisoner Ivan Denisovich, of his long day's work done under the worst possible conditions of cold, hunger, and fear, from which he emerges, in Solzhenitsyn's novel, with simple but hugely impressive dignity. In the novels of Solzhenitsyn a true sense of and love for work comes through, and part of Solzhenitsyn's distaste for politics is that it is the enemy of work. As the engineer Ilya Isakovich Arkhangorodsky says in *August 1914:*

"On one side—the Black Hundreds: on the other—the Red Hundreds! And in the middle"—he formed his hands into the shape of a ship's keel—"a dozen people who want to pass through to get on with a job of work! Impossible!" He opened his hands and clapped them together. "They are crushed—flattened!"

I was put in mind of the place of work in our lives, and in the general scheme of society, by an essay in a fairly recent issue of *Harper's* (December 1982) entitled "Dirty Work Should Be Shared" by Michael Walzer. The argument of Professor Walzer's essay, though its general line is conveyed by its title, is a bit blurry. Professor Walzer wishes that there weren't so much drudgery, so much hard, unpleasant, ungratifying, ill-rewarded work in the world. Like Oscar Wilde, from whose "The Soul of Man Under Socialism" he quotes, he would have "all unintellectual labor, all monotonous, dull labor, all labor that deals with dreadful things and involves unpleasant conditions . . . be done by machinery." Yet Professor Walzer knows this cannot be so, and that it is not soon likely to be so. But being an equalitarian, he yearns for a rearrangement of institutions, a readjustment of conditions, an alteration of names and attitudes whereby the burden of what he terms "dirty work" in society can be more equally shared than it is now. "Hence the question," he writes, "in a society of equals, who will do the dirty work? And the necessary answer is that, at least in some partial and symbolic sense, we all should do it." Exactly, or even roughly, how we should do it he does not say. Professor Walzer does, though, discuss such things as worker ownership of garbage collection firms, arrangements for work sharing in Israeli kibbutzim, the old French institution of the corvée (a form of labor for the state). But in the end he hasn't a solution and concludes not with a bang but with a whimper of exhortation: "Society's worst jobs should not be the exclusive business of a pariah class, powerless, dishonored, underpaid."

When one begins to talk about work in connection with power, honor, and payment, one steps onto a verdant field of quicksand. The world's work is, after all, only rarely paid for commensurately with its worth. This is a problem compounded by the fact that commensurability between work and wages is never an easy thing to determine, especially if one hopes to pay for work according to what one construes to be its social usefulness. If the job of determining such wages were mine, I should lower the wages paid for some work and raise those now paid for other, and some I should leave pretty much as they are. For example, I tend to doubt that the quality of policemen would become greatly improved if the job paid vastly more money, yet I have a hunch that the quality of doctors and lawyers might rise if they were paid less.

I used to hear the argument made fairly regularly that teachers are greatly underpaid, and at some point in this argument someone would inevitably say, "Why even garbage collectors make more!" As someone in favor of better education—a courageous stand for me to take, don't you think?—this argument always made me a trifle edgy. I thought that garbage collectors deserved more. For one thing, teachers are usually teachers by choice, while garbage collectors collect garbage for want of anything better to do. For another, a good teacher is rather rare, but who knows a bad garbage collector? But if we are going to talk about the underpaid, what about that national treasure, that lonely yet proud figure, on whose shoulders so much of the quality of a country's culture depends—I speak of course of that splendid and stalwart chap, the essayist.

As an equalitarian, Professor Walzer, if I read him aright, would have teacher, garbage collector, and essayist earning roughly equal

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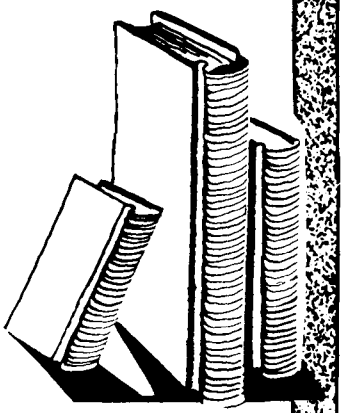

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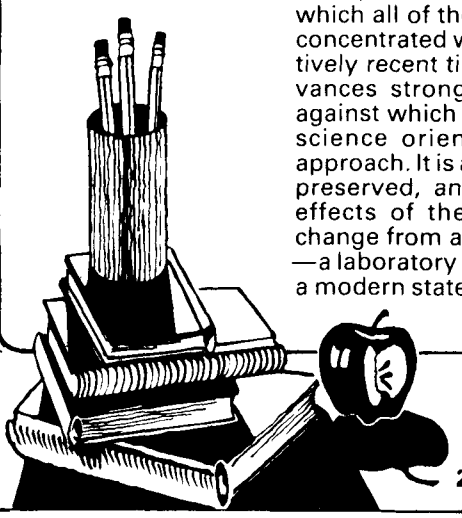

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salaries (a true leg up, by the way, for the essayist). He would also like them, I gather, to be equally honored and equally powerful. He argues against the degradation of certain kinds of work—I am not sure anyone is arguing for it—and wants a society in which there will be "no more bowing and scraping, fawning and toadying, no more fearful trembling; no more high-and-mightiness." Somehow, I must here confess, I find myself not so much unsympathetic as uninterested in Professor Walzer's proposals. I am not sure, for example, that sycophancy is built into specific jobs. A duke can be more fawning to a powerful prince than a washroom attendant to a United States senator; some of the worst snobs I have ever seen in action have been waiters. Nor do the teacher, the garbage collector, and the essayist bow and scrape, fawn and toady before one another—or, for that matter, before anyone (unless it is in the nature of the individual to do so). I am not aware, either, that one causes fearful trembling in the others. No, it seems to me that they greet one another the way most people do who work at very different jobs—with a lively and only slightly muted incomprehension.

But, then, the difference in point of view between Professor Walzer and me is vast. As a social theorist of sorts, he likes to come at things at a fairly high level of generality, while the points he attempts to make seem to me of interest only when they are treated on a much lower level of generality. He feels he knows why certain social classes bog down in dreary work; I am more interested in how it is and what it took for so many members of these classes to have been able to climb out successfully. He is sure much modern work is degrading; I am more impressed with the competence, dignity, and ingenuity that people apply to difficult jobs. He begins his observations with a yearning for equality; I begin mine yearning to understand how even one person—I, for example—came to do what he does.

Professor Walzer feels that perhaps dirty work "should be done by society's only legitimate proletariat—the proletariat of the young." There is, if I may say so, something a touch goofy about referring to the young generally as "proletariat"—Workers of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your sneakers!—for it gives yet another abstract twist to a word that has by now almost completely lost its relation to reality. Still, it is true that the young do get a goodly share of society's worst jobs; or at least they used to. I know I had my share of these jobs when young, and each time I would set out on another one, my father would say, "It can't hurt you. It's good experience." It took me a while to understand that the term "good experience" was my father's artful euphemism for "bad job."

Of these bad jobs, as I say, I had my share. Most of the "good experience" of my youth served to convince me of my incompetence. I found that I grew bored quickly, and could not very well sustain, on my first job, a false interest in dusting drugstore stock for the duration of my two- or three-hour shifts at Sanders Pharmacy. I tried out as a golf caddy; this was during the time before golf carts and when clubs were not yet called by number but still had such names as mashie niblick—names that seemed to me more appropriate for canned vegetables. But one had to be out of the house by five in the morning to get in two full rounds, which, at age thirteen, I found difficult to do, so I quit, thus proving to myself that I was not a person of much perseverance. ("Quitters never win," said my father.) My first year in high school I worked as a food bagger in one of the first supermarkets in our neighborhood, a place called Hillman's. Milk still came in bottles, and the reason I recall this so vividly is that milk bottles seemed to break through so many of my bags before the women carrying them were able to get up the marble stairs leading out of the store. Although for some reason I wasn't fired, it wasn't long before I was out searching for fresh "good experience."

By now I was convinced that I had a short attention span, little perseverance (or, as the moralizers put it, "stick-to-it-iveness"), and wasn't very good with my hands. Yet onward, ever onward, substituting for a month for a classmate, I next worked as a busboy in a neighborhood Chinese restaurant. The neighborhood was predominantly Jewish, and the man who ran the restaurant, though Chinese, had begun to look a little Jewish himself, in the odd way that people have of absorbing into themselves their surrounding atmosphere. (The most notable example is that of

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people who begin to resemble their dogs.) I cleared dishes, poured the remains of tea over the Formica-topped tables, swabbing the mess up with a damp cloth, and scraped off the dishes in the tumult of chopping, frying, and Chinese language in the kitchen. After the restaurant closed—during the middle of the week, roughly at 8:30—the staff could eat, limitlessly, anything they wished, with the exception of shrimp dishes. At that time—I was then fourteen—it was Chinese shrimp dishes almost exclusively that I liked, and so I ate scarcely anything at all. Through the mechanism psychologists call "overcompensation," I continue to try to make up for this youthful folly.

But that summer I began the best job of my life—that of ball boy for a nearby university tennis coach and teaching professional. My job was to tote out a large box of used balls, which the pro would use to demonstrate strokes—backhand, forehand, volley, and three kinds of serve—to his pupils. During the lesson I would shag the loose balls and return them to the box. I would also sometimes throw balls to the pro, a great gruff but very gentle fat man, who would thwack them back across the net. On occasion I would demonstrate a stroke or a serve. Mostly, though, I shagged balls.

The pay was poor—it barely covered the expenses of my travel and courtside soda pop intake—but the benefits bountiful. These included unlimited free court time and a modest discount on equipment. I would hang around the courts all day long, working two, at most three, hours a day, the remainder of the time playing with people whose partners didn't show up or were late, or filling in as a fourth for doubles. The courts were clay, of a light copperish color, from which loose clay dust turned one's shoes and tennis balls lightly beige. The sun shone down, the days stretched out. A taut tennis net, a clean white ball, and pow—and life, as Mr. Khayyám's *Rubáiyát* has it, was "paradise enow." The lesson this job taught, if on a very rudimentary level, was that work was best when it was combined with play.

This was a lesson reinforced by working with my father, which I began to do when I was sixteen years old and had acquired a driver's license. Although he then owned a business in partnership with another man, my father was this business's chief salesman, and my job was to drive him to cities anywhere from a hundred to four hundred miles away, where he would call on customers; I also lugged his sample cases, and sometimes wrote up his orders. My father, it occurs to me, was then exactly my age now.

I wish Arthur Miller had met my father before he wrote his lumpy and mawkish play about Willy Loman. My father was not only very good at what he did, but he seemed to enjoy it all immensely. "Now this is a very popular item," he would say to a customer. "I know a man who bought an enormous quantity of it—me!" Here was a man having a very good time while at work.

"What do you think," my father would ask, at six o'clock at the end of a day on which we had set out at four-thirty in the morning to drive two hundred miles. "What do you think—should we spend the night here or have a nice dinner and try to make it back home tonight?" For slow readers allow me to say that the correct answer was "have a nice dinner and try to make it back home tonight." And this we would do. Some days we would put in eighteen or twenty hours. I would usually sleep long the following morning. My father would be down at (as he called it) "the place" well before it opened for business. I love my work now, but I think my father must have loved his even more.

Love is not something one reads much about in connection with work. Quite the reverse, in fact. Ten or so years ago Studs Terkel assembled a book of interviews that he called *Working*, which turned out to be a clanging best-seller and which begins on this cheery note:

> This book, being about work, is, by its very nature, about violence—to the spirit as well as to the body. It is about ulcers as well as accidents, about shouting matches as well as fistfights, about nervous breakdowns as well as kicking the dog around. It is, above all (or beneath all), about daily humiliations. To survive the day is triumph enough for the walking wounded among the great many of us.

But then Studs Terkel's is the conventional anti-capitalist view of work. He is a man who sees capitalist conspiracies everywhere, the way the old John Birchers used to see Communist conspiracies. He has a syndicated in-

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terview show on FM radio, and on this show his idea of a fine time is to interview someone who has written about some fresh piece of big-business skulduggery. It might be an interview with a man who has written a book about, say, IBM having recently acquired the Gerber baby food company, and he has discovered that the plumbing connected to the urinals in the executive washroom at IBM leads directly to the assembly line at the Gerber baby food factory, and . . . "That's right, Studs, it's as bad as you think."

Although there is much tough work in the world, some of it done under grueling and some of it under grinding conditions, I doubt that the picture of work conveyed by a tricked-up book like *Working* is anywhere near accurate as a picture of how most people regard their work. True, many people have been cornered by circumstances into work they would not have chosen if their freedom of choice had been wider; many people find themselves under bosses or supervisors who are stupid or petty tyrants; and many others long to work at something other than what they work at now. Yet many more people, my guess is, feel the need and the stimulus and the satisfaction of their work—and for these people not to work, quite apart from the money that work provides, is a kind of slow death. When on television one hears the unemployed interviewed, there is, naturally enough, much talk of bills piling up and of financial worry generally; but at another level one can grasp a deeper demoralization—their feeling, now that they are deprived of work, of uselessness.

Other people's work often looks fairly interesting to me, or seems to have oddly interesting virtues. Apart from jobs for which I am altogether unfitted—lion tamer, say, or brain surgeon, or ship's captain—there are only two jobs for which I feel a strong antipathy. One is working in a bank, which involves too much detail for my taste and the additional difficulty of spending my days handling other people's money, which would not exactly plant roses in my cheeks. The other job I should not like to have is that of clergyman, especially today when values are so scrumptiously scrambled and the prospects of making a dignified appeal for faith so slim. Yet T. S. Eliot, I note, much preferred working in the international department of Lloyd's Bank in London to teaching; and many women in almost all the modern Western religions feel somewhat put down because they are not permitted to work at the job I wouldn't touch with a ten-foot pulpit.

When I was an adolescent I never had the best jobs: these included construction worker, which paid very well, built up muscles, and withal seemed very manly; or copyboy on a major metropolitan daily, which put one on the periphery of interesting events; or lifeguard, which, along with giving one an opportunity to acquire that most ephemeral of the world's possessions, a nice tan, set one in a fine position to meet girls. But neither did I have the worst jobs: these included setting pins in a bowling alley, which in those days paid ten cents a line and gave one an opportunity for so many uninteresting and extremely painful injuries; and selling shoes, especially women's shoes, which could try the patience of a glacier and often paid no commission, except 1 percent on polish and laces.

I had middling jobs. My last two years in high school I sold costume jewelry on Saturdays and during Christmas holidays downtown in what must have been one of the first of this country's discount stores. During the time I was there, two veterans of carnival life worked the costume jewelry concession with me. The first was Art, a man in his late forties, with pomaded black hair, who sweated heavily in all seasons. "Hold down the fort, kid," he would say, ducking out for ten or fifteen minutes, his breath, on return, areek with booze. He was a fumbling man who had confident views, particularly on contemporary sexual mores, which, though often amusing, seemed to me even then wildly erroneous. Then there was Fritz, an Englishman who referred to all other Englishmen as limeys. He had the accent of a man of some cultivation, and on the cheap cigarette lighters, lockets, and identification bracelets we sold he engraved names and initials with a grand artistic flourish. He was a fine companion, filled with stories of traveling round the world, in all a decent sort, though at the time very much down on his uppers. He would sometimes borrow a few dollars from me, which he always repaid. Fritz, too, was a boozer, not a nipper but a binger. He would miss work for two or three days, then come in as if nothing

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were amiss, his same good, gentle self. For reasons never known to me, and perhaps not to himself, he was not to be one of the world's winners.

By the time I had my first factory job, I was in college, which is to say that I knew for certain, if I hadn't already known it earlier, that I would not work at a labor job permanently. I was a visitor there, a tourist on the payroll. The factory made phonograph needles. It had no assembly line; instead most of the people, the majority of them women, worked at long tables. I worked in the receiving department. My job was to unload trucks, but not enough trucks came in to merit my working full-time at this, so I put in part of my time organizing and filing boxes of labels, which was heartily boring. But I also sat around a lot, schmoozing away with the head of the receiving room, a middle-aged man named Steve, who was extremely efficient at covering over the fact that he was exceedingly lazy. We were often joined by two brothers-in-law, Italians of fine high spirits, who were the factory's maintenance crew. Both were small men, and one of them might technically have been a dwarf. Well under five-feet tall with a large head, long arms, and big hands, he was courageous in his mischief, sometimes ducking out to one of the factory's upper floors, where behind packing cases he might take a nap of two full hours' duration. The brothers-in-law appeared to use the factory as a place to hang out during the day. Their real life was elsewhere. Their true speciality was fixing up old cars, which they would sell for a few hundred bucks profit. Then they would buy another, and start fixing it up.

At the factory it was known that I was a college student, which was problematic. It was the first inkling I had of the separation between those whose lives revolve around books and those whose lives don't. I didn't want the separation made any greater than it needed to be, so instead of saying that I was studying such things as literature, history, and philosophy, I claimed I was thinking of going to medical school. This turned out to be a mistake. More than once the brothers-in-law wanted to know if I needed any dead cats for purposes of dissection, and I was sure that one day I would have to bring a dead cat home on the bus in a shopping bag. Worse still, Steve and other people round the plant came to me for medical advice, some of it, I fear, rather intimate in nature.

Many people at the factory told me to be sure to return to school, saying that they regretted not having had the opportunity to go themselves. Yet their lives did not seem to me either dreary or dreadful. On coffee breaks in the lunchroom their talk was what most talk is about: the economy, the previous day's no-hitter or the pennant race, the bowling league being formed for the fall, their kids. I recall each afternoon standing in line to punch out. The working day did some people in; others, indomitable, were not in the least done in. Not at all. Work, I thought then, is neither intrinsically dignified nor undignified; it is the people doing the work who give it its character. There are people who can make the creation of poetry or leadership of a large university or corporation seem loathsome, and then there are people who can make the job of porter or waitress seem a good and useful thing.

The most impressive man I encountered in the army was a training sergeant named Andrew Atherton, who in private life had been a soda jerk in St. Louis; the most intelligent person in many academic departments in universities is the secretary. Nothing, really, so surprising in this. Nearly a century ago Henry James noted the common occurrence of "imbeciles in great places, people of sense in small." Although few people actually work in Henry James novels, James knew a great deal about work and its special benefits. After the rude failure of his play *Guy Domville* on the London stage, James, it will be recalled, slipped into a blue funk. The only way out of it, as he himself recognized, was work. Writing to his friend William Dean Howells, James recounted his depression and its antidote:

> The sense of being utterly out of it weighed me down, and I asked myself what the future would be. All these melancholies were qualified indeed by one redeeming reflection—the sense of how little, for a good while past (for reasons very logical, but accidental and temporary), I had been producing. I *did* say to myself, "Produce again—produce; produce better than ever, and all will yet be well.

And he did. And it was.

The restorative effects of work seem to be beyond doubt. Being out of work, for so many,

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is the surest path to self-loathing. The loss of work isn't only the loss of wages but the loss of an organizing principle in life. Blocked writers are but one example of the phenomenon. But one needn't turn to the arts for examples. Some years ago, when I had not yet produced enough work to be allowed to consider myself a writer, I underwent roughly a five-week period of unemployment. I was married and had children, and the sense of not producing for them diminished me in my own eyes, which is, I suppose, not surprising. What did surprise me, though, was that during this time jobs I would not formerly even have considered for myself suddenly came to seem highly possible, interesting, attractive even. Driving a bus, for one, or selling men's clothes, for another. Leisure enforced, I found, was no leisure at all, so I took no pleasure in my free time. At one point, just to be doing something, I attempted to sell newspaper subscriptions over the telephone; I rarely made more at this than seven or eight dollars for three hours' work—a figure so demoralizing that after less than a week of it, I quit. I walked around envying people who had jobs to go to. Unemployment had made me feel useless, utterly hopeless. I recognize that this doesn't compare with any sort of serious tragedy, or even with any sort of serious unemployment, but I nonetheless cannot recall when I felt quite so sorry for myself. At other difficult times in my life, at least I could throw myself into my work.

For a great many people TGIF (Thank God It's Friday) is a serious slogan, but then for a great many others so is TGIM (Thank God It's Monday). As a TGIM man, I think work has gotten a bad rep—and a bum rap—in recent years. Consider the word "workaholic," whose implicit meaning is drunk on work. Or consider the term "Protestant ethic," which began as an explanation for the economic behavior of a historical people but which today exists almost solely as a pejorative term applied to people who are thought to take their work too much in earnest. Those Protestants Max Weber described in his famous essay may or may not have been welcome in heaven for their hard work, but they surely could have spent their days worse—pool-side, let us say, at Caesar's Palace or at Esalin. I am neither Protestant nor quite a workaholic, but I have known many moments when work seemed to me a more pleasurable prospect than being with very good friends. Toward the end of two or three weeks of even a splendid vacation, I have longed to read my mail, to sit at my desk, to slip into harness.

Once one has acquired skills, it seems a waste not to use them. Strike, I say, even when the iron is merely warm. A career passes so quickly. ("Careerist" is another pejorative word.) Someone once said, cleverly in my view, that every career has five stages, which may be denoted thus: (1) Who is Aristides? (2) Get me Aristides. (3) We need someone like Aristides. (4) What we need is a young Aristides. (5) Who is Aristides? Am I now at stage 3, or getting close to stage 4? When I consider these stages, and how quickly one passes from one to the next, I think perhaps it is best to strike even before the iron is plugged in.

Life is short, and work life shorter. At many jobs, age works against one. Much work is, as the sociologists have it, age-specific. Certain jobs are more than a touch unseemly beyond a certain age: lifeguard, movie reviewer, gigolo, television anchor-man or anchor-woman (unless you happen to have one of those granitic Cronkitic faces). The jobs I work at—writing, editing, teaching—though one can go at them for quite a spell, nonetheless all have about them a sense of a prime period, after which one does not figure to get better. Some writers, most famously Yeats, found their true prime in their old age, but most do not get better as they get older. Editors beyond a certain period tend to lose their touch and their passion. And teachers, perhaps from having been allowed to hold the floor for so long before a captive audience, not infrequently grow spiritually gaseous and mentally gaga. When I think of these possibilities, it occurs to me to strike even without an iron.

H. L. Mencken, himself a hard and highly efficient worker, says somewhere that it is probably a fine idea for a person to change jobs every ten or so years. Without consciously setting out to do so, I seem to have been following this plan. The last time I changed jobs was roughly eight years ago, when, in my late thirties, I began teaching at a university. The chance to mold minds, the opportunity for lively exchanges of ideas, the pleasures of virtuous friendships with the young, all these are doubtless among the possible rewards of teaching. But what at-

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tracted me were the spacious margins of leisure—or, to put it less grandly, the time-off seemed terrific. My view of the job then coincides with that held by my barber now. Often, in order to beat the rush of customers that gathers in his shop in the afternoon, I will go in for a haircut at nine or nine-thirty in the morning. Flapping the sheet over me, he will usually say, with a barely perceptible smile in which I think I have espied envy mingling with the faintest contempt, "Through for the day, Professor?"

I still think the leisure offered by university teaching is impressive. Yet while working at it, the job often seems oddly enervating. Perhaps it has to do with the pressures of intellectual performance—of being "on," in several of the complicated senses of that simple word. Perhaps it has to do with working too exclusively among the young, which can be a sharp reminder that young is, most clearly, what one no longer is. Perhaps it is the element of repetition, for teaching is one of those jobs in which, as one grows older, one's responsibilities do not increase. Perhaps it has to do with the fact that, in teaching, the sense of intellectual progress, in one's students and in oneself, is often unclear, and teaching is never more tiring than when the sense of intellectual progress is absent.

Still, teaching has it moments, and these come in various forms: exhilaration, surprising intellectual discovery, appreciation for things one felt confident went unnoticed. Yet of the jobs I do, teaching is the one I approach with a tinge of fear. I shall hold back on a quotation from Kierkegaard here, but even after seven years on the job I often walk into classrooms slightly tremulous. Colleagues have told me that they continue to do so after thirty or more years of teaching. What is there to be fearful of? Of being boring? Of seeming boobish? Of, somehow, blowing it? I do, after all, know more than my students—at least most of the time I do. Yet the touch of fear is still usually there, and the troubling thing is that I tend to teach worse when it isn't.

I imagine fear has salubrious effects on other kinds of work. The stage fright of actors is of course well enough known. So, too, are those butterflies in the stomachs of even the most fearsome athletes before games. Do trial lawyers feel fear? I should hope that airline pilots feel a bit of it. I should hope, too, that surgeons feel fear, but fear, in their case, that stops well short of trembling. I don't mean to exaggerate the benefits of fear; a little of it, I have found, goes a long way.

So, in connection with work, does play. Good work often involves play, an element of fooling around even while doing the most serious things. Fortunate are those people in a position to transform their work into play. Artists are often able to do so. But I have seen fine waitresses and businessmen do it, too. The most fortunate people of all, though, are those for whom the line between work and play gets rubbed out, for whom work is pleasure and pleasure is in work. I may be one of those people. Strange. When I was a child I never dreamed of doing any particular kind of work, for none especially attracted me. I wished merely to be rich and respected, in a general way. Rich I am not; whether I am respected is not for me to say; but, because of the joy I am able to take in my work, I feel myself luckier than any child could have dreamed. Now, if only I could shake this feeling that, comes another Depression, it's guys like me they fire first.

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Bertrand Russell and the Eliots

ROBERT H. BELL

> *"Such is precisely the case," returned Eeldrop, "but I had not thought it necessary to mention this biographical detail."*
>
> —T. S. Eliot, "Eeldrop and Appleplex," 1917

THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG T. S. ELIOT, his first wife, Vivien, and Bertrand Russell was a subject on which none of the principals was later willing to elaborate. On this, as on most private matters, Eliot, like Eeldrop, rarely thought it necessary to mention biographical details. His "impersonal theory of poetry" became a cardinal tenet of New Criticism. "The progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice," Eliot wrote, "a continual extinction of personality." In his autobiographical writings, Bertrand Russell's account of personal relations could scarcely have been more forthcoming—with the signal exception of his friendship with the Eliots. He conspicuously neglected Eliot in his *Portraits From Memory*, and in his *Autobiography* dispatches both Eliots rather cooly: "As they were desperately poor, I lent them one of the two bedrooms in my flat, with the result that I saw a great deal of them. I was fond of them both, and endeavored to help them in their troubles until I discovered that their troubles were what they enjoyed." Correspondence appended to Russell's *Autobiography* suggests unusual intimacy and an inexplicable break.

The mystery of this relationship is perpetuated in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, where Russell is depicted as "supplying money to the husband and a not precisely discoverable degree of amorous affection to the wife." In *T. S. Eliot: A Memoir*, Robert Sencourt stresses the significance of the triangle: "It was to alter drastically both [Vivien's] hopes for the future with Tom, and her already fragile grasp on sanity [and was] the background of everything that Eliot wrote in verse or prose from 1915 onwards." Yet Sencourt has no idea why the friendship cooled and merely concludes that the whole story "remains fairly

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obscure." Ronald W. Clark's authoritative biography of Russell asserts that Russell and Vivien "did not . . . become lovers" and attributes the waning of the friendship to the tensions of the mentor-disciple relationship. Other critics, examining the relationship between Russell and Eliot, simply note "strains at which we may only guess." Where scholars fear to tread, gossips enter, with less sympathy and less regard for accuracy. In his *Diary* Evelyn Waugh quotes Graham Greene as saying that Vivien's insanity "sprang from her seduction and desertion by Bertrand Russell."

Russell wished to quash such rumors, and with Sencourt he succeeded. On May 28, 1968, Russell thanked Sencourt for sending advance excerpts from his *Memoir* of Eliot: "Both the account of my relations with the Eliots and your understanding of the situation are quite correct. I never had intimate sexual relations with Vivienne. The difficulty between Eliot and Vivienne sprang chiefly from her taking of drugs and the consequent hallucinations." Sencourt was understandably inclined to take Russell's word: after all, in his candid, even indiscreet, *Autobiography*, he had demonstrated that he had nothing to hide. Russell undoubtedly hoped that his *Autobiography* would be, at least for some considerable time, the definitive word on the matter. Vivien had died in 1947, Eliot in 1964, and Eliot's papers are sequestered until 2020. Yet despite Russell's efforts and Eliot's reticence, it is possible to assemble a reasonably detailed and revealing story about this extraordinary relationship.

Bertrand Russell met T. S. Eliot in the spring of 1914; Eliot was then a student in Russell's graduate seminar in philosophy at Harvard, where Russell was visiting professor. Eliot first struck Russell as "very capable of a certain exquisiteness of appreciation, but lacking in the crude insistent passion that one must have in order to achieve anything." Later he recalled that his pupil was "extraordinarily silent, and only once made a remark which struck me. I was praising Heraclitus, and he observed, 'Yes, he always reminds me of Villon.' I thought this remark so good I always wished he would make another." Eliot subsequently wrote a poem about Russell entitled "Mr. Apollinax," depicting his teacher as a mythic and sinister force arousing bizarre reactions in Cambridge gentility: "His pointed ears. . . . He must be unbalanced." Eliot sensed Russell's subterranean depths and his profoundly disconcerting blend of charm, brilliance, and menace.

In 1914 Russell was forty-two years old. He had been raised by his rigidly puritanical grandmother and married very young, partly to escape his grandmother's dominion. After about six years of happy marriage with Alys, his first wife, he fell out of love with her, and remained

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married but virtually celibate for some ten years. In 1911 he began a passionate affair with Lady Ottoline Morrell, which by 1914 was waning. Lecturing in Chicago, he made love with a young woman named Helen Dudley. "The impulse that came over me," he wrote Ottoline, "was like the impulse to rescue a drowning person, and I am *sure* I was right to follow it." But the episode was as much farce as romance. In his zeal Russell invited Helen to join him in England where they would marry if his divorce from Alys came through. By the time Helen Dudley arrived, in August 1914, Russell had forgotten his promise. He had become reconciled to Ottoline, horrified by the outbreak of war, and embroiled in pacifist activities, and consequently eager to dispatch Helen. In the *Autobiography* Russell makes it seem fairly neatly negotiated. In fact it took many awkward months, even years, to disentangle himself. He even sent Helen to Ottoline, without telling Helen about the nature of his relations with Ottoline, in hopes that the older woman could advise the younger in the ways of the world. Ottoline was chagrined to discover that Russell's love letters to Helen professed eternal love in terms remarkably similar to those he habitually addressed to her.

Eliot reentered Russell's life by chance in October 1914. Traveling on Harvard's Sheldon Fellowship to Merton College, Oxford, in pursuit of his doctoral studies in philosophy, Eliot encountered his former teacher on New Oxford Street in London. Russell, back at Trinity College, Cambridge, had temporarily set aside philosophical work and was plunged wholeheartedly into antiwar activities ("When the War came," he wrote, "I felt as if I heard the voice of God"). Preoccupied as he was, Russell naturally asked Eliot for his views on the war. "I don't know," Eliot replied. "I only know that I am not a pacifist." Years later Russell commented, "that is to say, he considered any excuse good enough for homicide."

But dissimilar politics did not preclude a blooming friendship. Under Russell's auspices, Eliot delivered a talk at Cambridge on "The Relativity of Moral Judgment." By the summer of 1915, Russell very much needed friends. In May the *Lusitania* had been sunk, hardening political attitudes, and Russell was becoming increasingly estranged from most of his colleagues, including his intimate friends the Whiteheads. Now that Ottoline and her husband Philip finally made their long-planned move from London to Garsington, Russell had a "less intimate" bond with Ottoline. Politics consumed him: he was working hard for the No-Conscription Fellowship and contemplated a collaboration with Ottoline's friend D. H. Lawrence. Their "brief and hectic" relationship, as Russell described it, ended bitterly; Lawrence's vituperative reproaches cut so deeply that they left Russell feeling suicidal. He pulled himself back together, wrote *Principles of Social Reconstruction* with-

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out Lawrence's assistance, and began a new friendship with Eliot and his bride.

T. S. Eliot was at this point twenty-six. He had married Vivienne (or Vivien) Haigh, a middle-class British woman of twenty-seven, June 26, 1915. Within a fortnight Russell dined with the newlyweds and described the occasion to Ottoline.

> I expected her to be terrible, from his mysteriousness; but she was not so bad. She is light, a little vulgar, adventurous, full of life—an artist I think he said, but I should have thought her an actress. He is exquisite and listless; she says she married him to stimulate him, but finds she can't do it. Obviously he married in order to be stimulated. I think she will soon be tired of him. She refuses to go to America to see his people, for fear of submarines. He is ashamed of his marriage, and very grateful if one is kind to her.

That the bride of a reticent husband would tell his renowned professor, "she married him to stimulate him, but finds she can't do it" suggests sexual tensions to which Russell, inevitably, was alert. Russell was also probably playing down her attractiveness. Sencourt, who knew her, describes Vivien as "vivacious . . . mingling . . . sparkle and sensitiveness with the sardonic and playful." She had an "undeniable seductiveness . . . fragile, mercurial vivacity . . . insinuating femininity." Vivien radiated sexual energy toward men and rather neglected other women. Aldous Huxley's first impression of the marriage was that "it is almost entirely a sexual nexus between Eliot and her; one sees it in the way he looks at her—she's an incarnate provocation. . . ."

Vivien very soon provoked Russell. "I am getting very fond of Mrs. Eliot, not in an 'improper' manner—she does not attract me much physically—but I find her a real friend, with a really deep human feeling about the war, & no longer at all unkind to her husband. I feel her a permanent acquisition, not merely the object of kindness, as I thought at first." Russell's letters to Ottoline depict Vivien as prone to suicidal despair and morbid vanity. He wished to help the Eliots: "I want to give her some other outlet than destroying him." Doubtless Russell was consciously reassuring Ottoline, who was still coping with the distraught Helen Dudley. Russell's letters sound astute, controlled, but strangely disengaged. He seems to know a very great deal about Vivien's inner life but remains confident he will never give her very much of his own.

Meanwhile Eliot decided he had better return home to explain himself to his family. He had married hastily, without informing his parents, who were already upset by the vagueness of his career plans. So in August 1915, Eliot made a solitary voyage to his family's summer residence in Gloucester, Massachusetts. Sencourt describes the confrontation as "one of the most tense and important moments of [Eliot's]

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life," in which father and son "parted bitterly." Eliot did not see his mother (with whom he was very close) for five full years, and he never saw his father again.

He returned from this tumultuous encounter bereft and broke, and Russell, typically generous, offered a room to Eliot and his wife in his Bury Street flat. Ottoline was naturally apprehensive about this development, but Russell remained adamant: "There is no reason for your fears . . . I will be much more careful than you seem to expect. And I feel sure that I can make things come right. . . . I would not for the world have a scandal, & as for the Eliots, it is the purest philanthropy—I am sorry you feel worried—there is *really* no need."

Russell perhaps felt toward Eliot a complex but not uncommon blend of the solicitude, gratification, and platonic affection that teachers often feel for their cherished students. He himself defined it as "an opportunity for *giving* a kind of affection that hitherto I have only been able to give in a slight, fragmentary way to pupils. . . ." For Russell this attitude touched upon a related desire—his ardent, frustrated wish for children. At forty-four and without marital prospects, he probably feared he would never have a family. "It is quite funny," he mused in a letter to Ottoline, "how I have come to love him, as if he were my son."

> He is becoming much more of a man. He has a profound and quite unselfish devotion to his wife, and she is really very fond of him, but has impulses of cruelty to him from time to time. It is a Dostojevsky [*sic*] type of cruelty, not a straightforward everyday kind. I am every day getting things more right between them, but I can't let them alone at present, and of course I myself get very much interested. She is a person who lives on a knife-edge, and will end as a criminal or a saint—I don't know which yet. She has a perfect capacity for both.

In the same month Russell used the parental image to characterize his attitude toward Vivien: "I shall be seeing a great deal of her—the affection I have for her is what one might have for a daughter, but it is very strong, & my judgment goes with it." He is the paterfamilias presiding over two young people who have demonstrable need for paternal authority and affection. Perceiving Vivien's symptoms and enjoying the role of teacher and counselor, Russell steered a clear course, at least as far as he was aware. In the autumn of 1915, while living at Russell's, Eliot taught at the Hycombe Grammar School. In September he wrote to his father that he remained "in urgent need of funds." At the end of the year, with Eliot tied to work and Vivien ill and needing a holiday, Russell took Vivien to Devon, where they spent five days at Torquay. "I went first with her to Torquay, and Eliot replaced me after a few days," writes Russell in the *Autobiography*. The phrase "replaced me" is pedantically exact and psychologically apt. Despite the

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dubious propriety of a married woman taking holiday with an unattached gentleman, their relations seemed to remain platonic. Possibly the only impulse stronger than sexual passion is the desire to be admired. Russell confessed this particular weakness, and reinforced his resolution, in a letter to Ottoline.

> I am rather ashamed of the discovery. . . . It is that she is trustful & thinks me wise and good—at least as regards her & as regards her I have been. Partly this satisfied my love of despotism, and partly it makes me feel not such a wretch as I have always felt for a long time in relation to you. I have had moments when I have thought I might like a closer relation with her, but that is not the truth—the whole satisfaction I have depends on being useful both to her & Eliot, and would vanish if I began wanting anything inconsistent with that. . . . I shall never have a physical relation with her, which in any case she would not at all want. . . . The problem for me as regards Mrs. E. is this: All the faults you suspect exist but they are gradually improving. I have made her trust me & look to me & care for me to a considerable extent. In spite of her faults I have an affection for her, because I feel they spring from a root of despair & that she might become quite different. And apart from affection, I have incurred responsibility. The affection is not constant, but the sense of responsibility is. I don't want to quarrel—I think with time I can avoid giving her the feeling that I have played her false, without getting into any permanent entanglement. But it will want time.

In response to the Torquay holiday, Eliot was grateful—even, given his habitual reticence, effusively so. He must have been haunted by fear that he had made a disastrous mistake in his marriage and craved reassurance that his Vivien was both worthy and capable of progress. "This," he writes Russell, "is wonderfully kind of you—really the last straw (so to speak) of generosity. I am very sorry you have to come back—and Vivien says you have been an angel to her—but of course I shall jump at the opportunity with the utmost gratitude. I am sure you have done *everything* possible and handled her in the very best way—better than I—I often wonder how things would have turned out but for you—I believe we shall owe her life to you, even." This letter Russell quotes in full in his *Autobiography*.

Eliot at this point was stretched to the breaking point. Revising his decidedly anti-Russellian doctoral thesis, on the philosophy of F. H. Bradley, he found a better position at Highgate Junior School. Nevertheless, Eliot hated teaching: "I know from experience," he recalled in 1950, "that working in a bank . . . was a rest compared to teaching in a school." Eliot booked passage home for April 1, 1916, but the crossing was canceled and he never made another effort to defend his thesis and collect his doctorate from Harvard. He spent the rest of the year writing poetry, philosophical essays, reviews, a series of lectures—and fretting. He was learning, as he puts it in an unpublished poem called "The Death of the Duchess," that "it is terrible to be alone with another

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person." It was indeed a terrible year for both Eliots: Vivien was constantly ill, Eliot's friend Jean Verdenal had died the previous year at Gallipoli, and Eliot himself was exhausted from work and worry. "I have *lived* through material for a score of long poems in the last six months," he wrote Conrad Aiken. To his brother Henry, Eliot wrote that "the present year has been, in some respects, the most awful nightmare of anxiety that the mind of man could conceive. . . ."

By spring of 1916, after his successfully received lectures, *Principles of Social Reconstruction,* Russell had established a regular social routine with the Eliots; he saw Vivien at lunch or dinner twice a week. Ottoline at last met, as she later recorded in her *Memoirs,* "the young American that Bertie met when he was at Harvard in 1914 and thought so clever and over-cultured." She added: "Bertie . . . was obviously interested in [Vivien]. He was convinced that the Eliots were not really happy together, but by a little manipulation on his part everything would come right between them. By what he told me I was not convinced of this and felt doubtful as to whether he would not really make things much worse." Ottoline's first impressions of Vivien were predictably unfavorable. "The dinner was not a great success. T. S. Eliot was very formal and polite, and his wife seemed to me of the 'spoilt kitten' type, very second rate and ultra feminine, playful and naive, anxious to show she 'possessed' Bertie, when we walked away from the restaurant she headed him off and kept him to herself, walking with him arm-in-arm. I felt rather *froissée* at her bad manners."

Eliot was nevertheless introduced at Garsington and sometimes visited there without Vivien; occasionally, too, Vivien appeared without her husband, once escorted by Russell. Russell was by this point more deeply engaged than ever in political activity. In May 1916 he publicly acknowledged having written a "seditious" pamphlet protesting punishment of a conscientious objector. On June 5 he appeared in court, made an impressive speech, and lost. He was fined one hundred pounds, which he refused to pay, but his friends raised the funds for him. Still, on July 11, 1916, he was removed from his position at Trinity College, Cambridge, after an acrimonious dispute.

Meanwhile, Russell became increasingly entangled, despite assurances to the contrary, with the Eliots. He wrote Ottoline in June: "Last night I dined with the Eliots and discussed money. The passion of her life is dancing & ever since I have known her I have paid for her dancing lessons whenever she has been well enough. I don't suppose she will ever be any good, because of her health, but it is such a passion that I can't bear to baulk it if I can possibly help it. Of course it would save my pocket if her husband got better paid work." He wonders if Ottoline can help place Eliot at the *New Statesman* or the *Manchester Guardian.*

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By summer Ottoline became openly resentful of the Eliots. His writing, which had first struck her as "very remarkable," she now characterized as "queer neurasthenic poetry." Of Mrs. Eliot she wrote: "I don't really understand her influence over him. It seems odd that such a frivolous, silly little woman should affect him so much, but I think he likes to feel that she depends on him, and she looks up to him as a rich god, for he lavishes presents on her of silk underclothing and all sorts of silly things, and pays for her dancing lessons. It takes all his money and now he expects us to raise a fund to pay the £100 fine. . . . I am busy collecting money for this purpose."

Russell now felt emotionally overextended and became highly self-critical. Besides Ottoline and Vivien, he was flirting fairly seriously at this time with Katherine Mansfield. And Helen Dudley, while no longer a problem, had moved into Russell's flat after the Eliots left. He "used" Vivien, so he told Ottoline, to detach himself from her. But this is too harsh and too narrow an assessment of his own behavior. He was not *simply* using Vivien; Russell tended to interpret himself solely in terms of the woman he was addressing at that moment. Russell also told Ottoline that "I never contemplated risking my reputation with her and I never risked it so far as I can judge." On this evidence, Ronald Clark concludes that Russell and Vivien were never lovers. Russell's romantic and political tribulations and Ottoline's extraordinary loyalty brought them closer; accordingly, he moved to extricate himself from Vivien. In September 1916 he writes: "I shall soon have come to the end of the readjustment with Mrs. E. I think it will be all right, on a better basis. As soon as it is settled, I will come to Garsington. I long to come."

Now, however, enter Lady Constance Malleson (Colette O'Niel), who eclipsed everyone else in Russell's universe. They had met on July 31, 1916, at the trial of Clifford Allen, who was chairman of the No-Conscription Fellowship. Their affair began September 23—a fascinating and complex relationship commemorated by Colette in a novel, two autobiographical memoirs, and a collection of her and Russell's love letters. Although the letters, now in the Russell Archives at McMaster University, cannot yet be quoted directly, they may be paraphrased.

Colette O'Niel was twenty, beautiful, and an aspiring actress from an aristocratic Anglo-Irish family involved in what we would now, in the cant phrase, call an open marriage with the actor Miles Malleson. To Colette, Russell wrote with his characteristic blend of passion and candor. Almost immediately he told Colette about Ottoline; soon he delicately described his relationship with the Eliots. Within a few months, their affair deepened and became complicated by other romances.

The year 1917 marked a somewhat better period for T. S. Eliot. He

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found a new, less fatiguing position in the colonial and foreign department of Lloyd's Bank. Although kind friends more than once tried to rescue Eliot for poetry by raising funds, he preferred the security of his position and the promise it held out of a pension. The new job helped Eliot's morale considerably. "Vivien was very anxious about my health," he wrote his mother. "Now I am better and more cheerful she is much happier." Shortly after the bank appointment, he became assistant editor of *The Egoist*, a position (unbeknownst to him) partly subsidized by Ezra Pound. Vivien meanwhile gamely but vainly tried to find work, despite "sleepless nights and headaches."

The summer of 1917 marked perhaps the zenith of the Russell-Colette affair: they spent a fortnight together that each remembered ever after as idyllic. By autumn, however, Russell broached a new scheme to the Eliots. Since the Eliots wished some time apart, and he needed more constant companionship, why didn't he, Russell, and Vivien find a cottage in the country? Eliot could come out on weekends. Vivien was receptive to the idea and for a time it seemed feasible. Russell hoped this plan would not wound Colette.

In late October, Colette O'Niel suggested to Russell that they cool their affair into friendship. Russell was shocked into a revelation. He wrote Colette that he had intended platonic relations with Vivien Eliot but that she wanted more than that. Russell led Vivien to expect more if the cottage scheme materialized. At last they made love, or so Russell notes in a letter to Colette, but for him it was hellish and loathsome. He disguised his antipathy and she seemed satisfied, but since then he has had awful nightmares that strip his self-evasions. He no longer wants to share a cottage if it means such physical intimacy. Sex with anyone else, he told Colette, was unbearable. Is she so thoughtless that she can't see his depth of love and suffering? The cottage scheme was an unsuccessful ploy to detach himself from Colette. He felt nauseated by corruption. Now he must repudiate Vivien and he can't face the responsibility. If only he could come home to Colette's arms, he might have the strength to do what he must.

In using Vivien as a pawn and finally making love with her, Russell violated the principles he had maintained scrupulously since June 1915. Why did he deny having sexual relations with Vivien in his letter to Sencourt in 1968? I don't think it was merely what Russell called (in another context) "the emotional unreliability of memory." More likely the old philosopher was being sophistical in specifying that they never had "intimate sexual relations"—meaning that their sexual relations were not truly intimate. Perhaps he wished to protect the innocent Eliot, whom in some ways he had loved as a son. Or perhaps he was trying to protect the guilty—notably, himself. He made love to a troubled young

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woman, found it unsatisfying, and instantly regretted it. He was forced to see himself as a hypocrite exploiting the trust of someone who needed his help. Like a bad child he sought Colette's forgiveness, in imagery that suggests a nursing baby, at the very time he asserted his greater wisdom and depth.

However we judge Russell's behavior, the whole, confused relationship with Vivien precipitated some of his most painful, probing introspection. Describing the "readjustment" with Vivien to Ottoline, when he still seemed to have things under control, he had reached a remarkable self-realization.

> It is odd how one finds out what one really wants, and how very selfish it always is. What I want permanently—not consciously, but deep down—is stimulus, the sort of thing that keeps my brain active and exuberant. I suppose that is what makes me a vampire. I get a stimulus most from the instinctive feeling of success. Failure makes me collapse. . . . I had a sense of success with Mrs. E. because I achieved what I meant to achieve (which was not so very difficult). . . . The rare moments of mystic insight that I have had have been when I was free from the will to succeed. But they have brought a new kind of success, which I have at once noticed and wanted, and so my will has drifted back into the old ways. And I don't believe I should do anything without this sort of will. It is very tangled.

It seems clear from this letter, a full year before the confession to Colette, that Russell feared succumbing to "the old ways." He was rigorously self-critical; he saw himself as an insatiable vampire. In his *Autobiography* he called himself a "non-supernatural Faust" and elsewhere spoke of his "Satanic mysticism." Once Russell casually inquired of a correspondent whether he had read Eliot's poem "Mr. Apollinax." "He seems to have noticed the madness," Russell noted, which in context suggests sexual madness. With men, Russell turned his powers into argument that most found intimidating; with women it was more often turned into an imaginative sympathy most found irresistible. Even when the impulse was benevolent, as it was for so long toward Vivien Eliot, Russell feared that he was a "vampire." This is part of what Russell meant when he acknowledged a lifelong "sense of sin."

Passion for Colette O'Niel overpowered his will and he lapsed into using Vivien Eliot shamelessly. Worse, the tactic worked. Colette responded to his confession at once: she would come to him, and he should not regret his urgent needs. As he will be exhausted by his impending interview with Mrs. Eliot, she adds comfort and sympathy. Neither Colette nor Russell sound much concerned with Vivien—who behaved admirably, especially for someone as disturbed as she is reputed to have been. Russell dreaded seeing her, but to his enormous relief, Vivien took the initiative in disentangling them; breaking the

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sexual taboo apparently enabled them to break their relationship. He wrote Colette that Vivien was saintly in transcending her own pain and helping him.

During the next six weeks, Russell's feelings for Vivien took another inexplicable turn. On January 1, 1918, he wrote Colette that he neither loved Vivien nor wished physical relations with her. But he cherished her companionship and selfless affection and would always appreciate her helping him through these difficult months. He described Vivien as an essential part of his life, but added that he was really making a despairing appeal to Colette to assuage his wounded pride. His very life, he insisted, depended upon her response. (Implied threats of suicide, incidentally, had also marked his relationships with Ottoline and Alys.)

Colette responded with remarkable poise for a twenty-year-old woman, married and involved with at least three men. She noted that Russell had been complaining about the Vivien complication for months, and that this liaison had unsettled his work quite as much as she herself had. Russell, reminded of his illegitimate or "vampirish" needs, now urged Colette to forget him and spare herself misery. His own life, he said, is imprisoned (one of his favorite metaphors) and brought hell to everyone he loves. But by March 29, 1918, he felt redeemed by Colette's love and saved from the self-loathing that haunted him always.

In the spring of 1918, Russell published a sentence construed as likely to damage relations with the American allies, for which he was tried and convicted in Brixton.* Through the auspices of influential friends, his incarceration was relatively civilized, except for his wild jealousy of Colette's affairs. Prison did not disrupt Russell's relationship with the Eliots. T. S. Eliot was listed as a preferred visitor at Brixton Prison, and Russell loaned them his cottage, Marlowe, for the summer. Prison, however, reinforced Russell's intention to break finally with Vivien. In early July 1918 he asked his brother Frank to tell Eliot that he would probably have to give up financial interest in the house, which constituted a polite notice of eviction.

Meanwhile, the Eliots began meeting more people—the kind of people who recorded their impressions. Leonard Woolf recalled in his *Autobiography* that he and Virginia liked T. S. Eliot very much when they met him in November 1918, "but we were both a little afraid of him. He was very precise, formal, cautious, or even inhibited." Virginia described him in her *Diary* as a "polished, cultivated, elaborate young American, talking so slow, that each word seems to have a special finish

* The sentence read: "The American Garrison which will by that time be occupying England and France, whether or not they will prove efficient against the Germans, will no doubt be capable of intimidating strikers, an occupation to which the American Army is accustomed when at home."

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allotted it . . . very intellectual, intolerant, with strong views of his own, and a poetic creed." The Woolfs and Eliot became great friends during the 1920s—but in her diary Virginia constantly adverts to the same qualities in Eliot: "Tom was sardonic, guarded, precise, & slightly malevolent, as usual."

In the early years of their marriage, Vivien elicited several favorable and sympathetic reactions. Stephen Spender said Vivien "wanted to enjoy life, found Eliot inhibiting and inhibited, yet worshipped him." Aldous Huxley wrote that he rather liked her: "She is such a genuine person, vulgar, but with no attempt to conceal her vulgarity, with no snobbery of the kind that makes people say they like things, such as Bach or Cezanne, when they don't." Sir Herbert Read recalled, "Posterity will probably judge Vivienne harshly, but I remember her in moments when she was sweet and vivacious; later her hysteria became embarrassing." Read adds that Eliot only once in correspondence discussed his marriage and that letter was destroyed, he thinks possibly at Eliot's request.

Other acquaintances patronized and disliked Vivien. Virginia Woolf's first impressions, for example, were of "a washed out, elderly & worn looking little woman." The photographs from Garsington bear Virginia out: in an early photograph, Vivien appears gay, theatrical; later she disappears into herself, obviously out of place. Virginia Woolf herself was intermittently solicitous, but only self-consciously so; she would occasionally write or have Vivien to tea, but frequently recorded her antipathy in her *Diary*, citing Vivien as "making me almost vomit, so scented, so powdered, so egotistic, so morbid, so weakly."

Nineteen eighteen was another terribly trying year for the Eliots: both suffered poor health that winter. Eliot had lost fifteen pounds since Oxford. Nevertheless, he collected numerous testimonials, trying to persuade the armed services to accept him for the war. Vivien "still has bad migraines whenever she worries or overexerts herself." Eliot described Vivien as an "invalid . . . entirely dependent on me." "I do not understand it, and it worries me," he wrote his mother on December 22, 1918. In January 1919 Eliot wrote his attorney, friend, and benefactor John Quinn about the manuscript containing critical prose, "Prufrock," and other poems: "I settled over here in the face of strong family opposition," so publication of his book "would go toward making my parents contented with conditions and toward satisfying them that I have not made a mess of my life, as they are inclined to believe." Shortly thereafter, Eliot's father died. Eliot was the only child who inherited no money outright, although money was left for him in a trust that reverted to the family on his own death; in short, Vivien was not considered part of the family. This was a financial decision on the senior Eliot's part of

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great importance, as it forced Eliot to work very hard at several jobs simultaneously.

On January 18, 1919, Vivien wrote Russell that she disliked fading intimacies and wished to break completely. Despite Vivien's curt letter, Russell continued to write to her, indicating (at the very least) that his concern for her was more than that of a roving seducer. Eliot was deeply upset that Russell continued to write Vivien. Vivien's father had had two operations that year and she suffered a nervous collapse. Now in a doctor's hands, she was, Eliot announced, expressly forbidden to answer Russell's letters.

If Eliot did not know the precise nature of Russell's relationship with Vivien, he certainly knew that Russell upset her. In what must have been a very delicate and mortifying gesture, Eliot instructed Russell to cease and desist. Already guilty in his own mind of egregious insensitivity and exploitation, Russell saw his exit cue. But there was abundant guilt to go around. Although Eliot's correspondence is not yet available, and is unlikely to contain intimate revelations, his poetry is full of references to frustrated or failed sexual relations, animosity toward women, and the ecstatic agony of saints: "We each have the sort of life we want, but his life went straight to the death he wanted. . . . Because his flesh was in love with the pointed arrows" ("The Death of St. Narcissus"). Occasionally, Eliot's normally fastidious conversation is revealing. "Missing trains is awful," commented Virginia Woolf on March 22, 1921. "Yes," replied Eliot, "but humiliation is the worst thing in life." With the Woolfs, Eliot gradually became more candid, as for example confessing his Prufrockian deficiencies. After a weekend at Ottoline's Garsington, he remarked, "I behaved like a priggish pompous little ass." Virginia Woolf noticed his "anemia, self-consciousness," and concluded that "coldness at least must be a sore point with him."

In the summer of 1919 Russell fell in love with Dora Black, a student at Girton College. His relationship with Colette O'Niel had fluctuated violently and now foundered on her refusal to have children and his refusal to respect her career. Throughout the summer Russell had "difficulties and awkwardnesses in preventing" their visits "from overlapping." Dora was an extremely gifted and unusual young woman, a feminist whose politics included a desire for maternity. Although he continued to love Colette and wished to maintain relations, the possibility of paternity was to Russell irresistible. In 1920 he visited Soviet Russia, and in 1921 he and Dora spent the year in China.

From this point the correspondence between Russell and the Eliots becomes scanty, sporadic, and cryptic. The letters from Eliot that Russell published in his *Autobiography* are tantalizing but inexplicable without the history of their relationship. Russell returned from China and wed

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Dora on September 27, 1921, in order to legitimate their impending child. In November, Vivien Eliot wrote: "Tom says he is quite sure the baby *will* have pointed ears, so you need not be anxious." Vivien alluded, of course, to "Mr. Apollinax," but she also deftly reminded Russell of his "Satanic" self-image.

By 1921 T. S. Eliot's health had deteriorated discernibly and required treatment. Whatever his literary friends thought of Vivien, Eliot needed her presence. To Richard Aldington he wrote, "I could not bear the idea of starting this treatment quite alone in a strange place, and I have asked my wife to come with me and stay with me as long as she is willing. . . ." On November 6 he wrote: "My 'nerves' are a very mild affair, due not to overwork but to *aboulie* and emotional derangement which has been a lifelong affliction. Nothing wrong with my mind." Nor did he blame Vivien. On the contrary. He admired Vivien's spirit in combating her own ailments: "I have never known anybody stick to a thing with such persistence and courage, often with relapses which made her feel that the whole thing was useless." Friends such as Conrad Aiken agreed that it was no more Vivien's problem than Eliot's. "Poor devil," Aiken wrote G. B. Wilbur about Eliot, "cries out for analysis more than anyone I've ever seen. He's a perfect Gordian knot—he thinks he's god. A passion for perfection—etc. His wife's an invalid." Virginia Woolf described Eliot as "about to break down—infinitely scrupulous, tautologous, & cautious . . . he elaborates and complicates, makes one feel that he dreads life as a cat dreads water."

Eliot's letters in the early 1920s convey talk of unalleviated illness and misery. To Leonard Woolf he was especially forthcoming about his "series of calamities," because "we know what constant illness is, and I think very few people do" (June 2, 1922). Desperately he hoped Leonard might have some insight and assistance to offer. Often he praised Vivien's efforts and never exonerated himself. He asked if Leonard knew a doctor "with psychoanalytic knowledge," and added: "This is obviously *not* for V. but for myself if for anyone."

Upon the publication of *The Waste Land* in 1922, Russell wrote to Eliot in praise. Eliot responded with particular pleasure that Russell liked Part V, "which in my opinion is not only the best part, but the only part that justifies the whole, at all." He added that Vivien had wanted to send Russell the unpublished manuscript eighteen months earlier, "because she was sure that you were one of the very few persons who might possibly see anything in it." Eliot's comment, and *The Waste Land: A Facsimile and Transcript*, indicate that Vivien was more intimately involved with its composition and revision than had been formerly realized. For example, Pound considered this speech from "A Game of Chess" mere "photography"—that is, too clearly about Eliot's home life:

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"My nerves are bad tonight. Yes, bad. Stay with me.
"Speak to me. Why do you never speak. Speak. Speak.
"What are you thinking of? What thinking? What?
"I never know what you are thinking. Think."

Although usually persuaded by Pound's suggestions, Eliot left this passage intact. Perhaps he was encouraged by Vivien's enthusiasm: down the page she wrote in bold letters WONDERFUL. She also contributed to the Pub scene one fascinating line: "What you get married for if you don't want children?" At her request Eliot deleted one line about the game of chess: "The ivory men make company between us." Perhaps this is too "photographic" even for Vivien, who wrote YES in recognition alongside the line. Is this a submerged reference to Russell, using Vivien and Eliot as pawns in other sexual encounters? After Vivien died in 1947, Eliot restored the line from memory in making a fair copy of the text. In the flush of his success with the poem, responding to Russell's praise, Eliot must have forgotten his request in 1919 that Russell disappear: "We felt that *you* might prefer to have nothing to do with *us*: It is absurd to say we wished to drop you." He said that Vivien had nearly died of a frightful illness and asks if he might come to tea. "I should like to see you very much—there have been *many times* when I have thought that."

In April 1925 Eliot was once again despairing. He paid the Woolfs a "long gaslit emotional rather tremulous and excited visit," as Virginia Woolf noted in her *Diary*, in which he confided some of his marital woe. He asked Leonard if he knew anything about psychoanalysis and said that Vivien wouldn't let him out of her sight. If he had to go out, he would return to find her in a half-fainting state. "Tomorrow will be wretched," he said, "for he was now away from 8 to 11." The Woolfs advised another doctor. "But whether it's doctors or sense or holiday or travel or some drastic method unknown that's to cure that little nervous self-conscious bundle—heaven knows."

Obviously bereft and terrified, Eliot contacted Russell again the same week, this time seeking an interview. His old mentor was now happily immersed in family and writing. "I want words from you which only you can give," wrote Eliot. "But if you have now ceased to care at all about either of us, just write on a slip 'I do not care to see you' or 'I do not care to see either of you'—and I will understand. In case of that, I will tell you now that everything has turned out as you predicted 10 years ago. You are a great psychologist." In this terrible letter, Eliot almost seemed to be addressing his father as much as Bertrand Russell.

Apparently Russell was moved enough to reply at once but too wary to extend an invitation. Eliot wrote again on May 7, 1925:

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As you say, it is very difficult for you to make suggestions until I see you. . . . I don't know to what extent the changes which have taken place, since we were in touch with you, would seem to you material. What you suggest seems to me of course what should have been done years ago. Since then her health is a thousand times worse. Her only alternative would be to live quite alone—if she could, and the fact that living with me has done her so much damage does not help me to come to any decision. I need the help of someone who understands her—I find her still perpetually baffling and deceptive. She seems to me like a child of 6 with an immensely clever and precocious mind. She writes *extremely* well (stories, etc) and [with] great originality. And I can never escape from the spell of her persuasive (even coherent) gift of argument. Well, thank you very much, Bertie—I feel quite desperate. I hope to see you in the Autumn.

Eliot's desperation increased over the next several years, during which he again lost touch with Russell. Vivien was frequently bedridden, incapacitated by mysterious ailments nobody could identify, and increasingly hysterical. In November 1930 Virginia Woolf recorded in her *Diary* that Eliot had "a leaden, sinister look about him. But oh—Vivienne! Was there ever such a torture since life began,—to bear her on one's shoulders, biting, wriggling, raving, scratching, unwholesome, powdered, insane. . . . This bag of ferrets is what Tom wears round his neck." Eliot left Vivien in 1933; she was institutionalized for a period and died in 1947. Russell and Eliot apparently had no further contact until they exchanged brief notes in the 1950s, by which time both had become eminent and more serene.

The triangle, then, was neither as innocent as Russell wished us to believe nor as sordid as gossips imagined. Instead, it was revealing in the deepest sense—not simply exposing embarrassing facts, but providing significant glimpses of three complex personalities. Russell did not hastily seduce and ruthlessly abandon Vivien. He slept with her, possibly at her urging, only after an intense and protracted (if ambiguous) friendship. He did so out of quite compelling need, and regretted it immediately. His repentance seems to have been genuine—as far as such complicated responses can be assessed by anyone, including one's self. Russell's remorse touched his deepest fears about himself and provoked anguished self-reproaches. In his poetry Eliot imagined and articulated exactly what Russell experienced.

> And last, the rending pain of re-enactment
> Of all that you have done, and been; the shame
> Of motives late revealed, and the awareness
> Of things ill done and done to others' harm
> Which once you took for exercise of virtue.
> ("Little Gidding," II)

We don't know whether or not Eliot ever learned what had happened

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between Russell and Vivien, although it seems likely that he suspected. Until Eliot's private papers are made available, we can make only the most tentative speculations about his feelings. Certainly he understood Russell's attraction to and repulsion from Vivien, since he himself struggled with it for some fifteen years. One pole of Eliot's complex attitude might have been expressed by Sweeney Agonistes: "I knew a man once did a girl in / Any man might do a girl in / Any man has to, needs to, wants to / Once in a lifetime do a girl in." And Harry in *The Cocktail Party* says that he killed his wife, although Charles speculates, "I suspect it is simply the wish to get rid of her / Makes him believe that he did." Another stance Eliot often takes in his poetry is the way of martyrdom, although the early glorification of self-immolation gives way to Becket's self-skepticism: he is wary lest he be too eager to achieve this other consummation. Eliot, like Thomas à Becket, heard the temptation to "Seek the way of martyrdom, make yourself the lowest / On earth, to be high in heaven."

In their writings, Eliot and Russell each planted allusions and clues to what had occurred. If Russell was unable to admit publicly what he had done, he was equally incapable of forgetting it. He used autobiography as an opportunity to suppress and imply what had happened. For an autobiographical narrator, he makes the strange and telling confession that he is prone to disguising things: "It became second nature to me to think that whatever I was doing had better be kept to myself, and I have never quite overcome the impulse to concealment which was thus generated." Eliot, of course, adamantly discouraged biographers, although he described *The Waste Land* as "the relief of a personal . . . grouse against life." One of his most resonant lines is repeated in *Murder in the Cathedral* and *Four Quartets:* "human kind / cannot bear very much reality." Bertrand Russell and T. S. Eliot each bore a burden of sexual guilt, though for opposite reasons, and both felt partly responsible for Vivien's sad fate.

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Cross-Purposes

ERIC TRETHEWEY

Mornings, I ran in the early light,
a stranger to backcountry roads in Quebec.
Eighteen and not knowing where to turn,
but to this painful discipline of movement
repeating itself in all directions,
I followed lanes where they wound through orchards,
beside shallow streams in gravel beds.

And one hushed dawn, eyes trained level
on the ruts ahead, I turned toward the sun
slung low above the plough-rippled earth,
looked up at last when I came upon Christ
at a crossroads, twelve feet of him
crucified in stone, rearing up from the furrows
like a giant stalk of weather-bleached corn.

Since the sunlight was splotched on his body
like blood, and a lone jay screeched in the blossoms,
his cry one ratchety turn of grief
on the revolving year, I could see
what was sinister and splendid in his anguish.
I wheeled left at the crossroads, ran hard
into the passionate promise of morning air.

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A Visit to Pasternak

MIRIAM H. BERLIN

The whole of the earth was his inheritance
But he preferred to share it with all men
Anna Akhmatova

IN 1957 FEW AMERICANS WENT TO THE USSR. Following Khrushchev's secret speech to the Twentieth All-Union Party Congress the year before, travel became possible; but, just a year after the invasion of Hungary, an American in Moscow was a rarity, and encounters with the Russians were tinged with the ambiguity bred of potential dangers unseen but felt. No doubt, the dismantling of the Stalinist machinery had begun; the cracks in the monolith were patently visible. Our very presence indicated this. But possession of a visa was only the first and most external evidence of those changes promised by Khrushchev's revelations. How far they might go, whom they would affect, how much opportunity there might be for openness in thought, speech, writing, even random contact without danger to the Soviet citizen, how far the realm of arbitrariness might be diminished—all this was unknown. And the very absence of any markers gave that thrill so often experienced from the exotic, the unexpected, and the slightly difficult.

The question was hardly whether or not we would be permitted to see the fabulous collection of twentieth-century paintings in the Hermitage or the icons in the Tretyakov Gallery. We suspected that, however difficult, these problems would be surmountable. Bullheaded bureaucracy is a universal disease, the Soviet strain peculiarly virulent. But the major question for the visitor to the USSR concerned not monuments but people. Diplomats and journalists stationed in Moscow complained bitterly about their isolation; they lived in a kind of purdah. As visitors, we seemed more free to move about. We did not feel under scrutiny. Speaking Russian gave me immediate access to people in the parks as well as to the professors on whom I called. Indeed, as there were very few Intourist guides available, the Bureau personnel appeared almost grateful when we dispensed with their services, leaving the translators for non-Russian-speaking foreigners. This was all very well, but how

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could we be sure that the apparent openness was real, that even random encounters with people—pensioners on park benches, students in the Metro, neighbors seated on our right and left at the theater—who looked at us with awe, might not get them into trouble. What of the young airport clerk, a university graduate in Scandinavian languages who hitched a ride in our cab from the airport in Leningrad, and, after animated conversation, spent the next day with us, invited us to his apartment, and dined as our guest at our hotel? Who was he? A lively young man starved for contact with another world? At what price might he have purchased that interesting afternoon and evening? Or was he a plant of some sort, winning our confidence with his charm?

These were questions we discussed with the American and Western journalists we met in Moscow. We were the envy of that small group, for we had several such experiences in as many days. I say this to indicate that, despite the clear new note of the official pronouncements, the appearance of foreigners in increasing numbers, the accessibility of monuments and people alike, the beginnings of new relationships whose further growth would only enrich the participants—despite these things, every encounter, each conversation, any shared reflection, opinion, or insight gave rise to the question whether we might be harmful in some yet undefined way to those we met.

I emphasize here not the obvious aspects of a closed, tight, totalitarian society, but the ambiguities inherent in the changes afoot. Our unaccustomed awareness of being in uncharted waters must have been magnified in our Soviet friends with their sixth sense, that extrasensory political perception developed in the twentieth century. Our impressions were of daunting courage, unequivocal eagerness to know and experience other worlds so long closed, and the desire to share what had been so hidden and twisted. No one embodied this more vividly than Boris Leonidovich Pasternak.

In Oxford, on our way to the USSR, we had been given a mandate: "Go to the poet and find out if he really wants the manuscript we have to be translated and published. And, by the way, take these books to him. He will hate them, but he must read them." It was August of 1957, and the manuscript in question was *Doctor Zhivago*.

We had visited the poet's sister, Josephine Pasternak, a warm, round, cheerful woman who had lived in Oxford for many years. Greetings and affectionate messages were what we took from the English branch of the family. Along with these, a traveling library of contemporary European literature: Kafka, Sartre, Camus. We had telephone numbers, the poet's and his brother's in Moscow, and a diagrammatic sketch of three clumps of trees and two dirt paths at the railroad station in Peredelkino, the village where Boris Leonidovich lived for most of the year.

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Some things were obvious. Don't call from the hotel. Don't even mention your name over the telephone. Just say, "I am a friend from the West, and I have messages and books." Try not to be followed. Leave no recognizable names and places in your journal. It was a bit scary, so unknown. And, if we were to succeed in our effort to visit Boris Leonidovich, how dangerous might it be for him?

In Moscow we heard that Pasternak had been ill, perhaps in the hospital. No one answered the telephone at his apartment. We called his brother, dutifully indicating that we were "friends from the West, bearing greetings from your sister and books for your brother." "Go to Peredelkino," he said, "he will be glad to see you. There is no telephone. Just go."

The world now knows Pasternak as one of the greatest poets of the twentieth century. To some this was patent in the thirties, but to many his was simply a vaguely familiar name. Pasternak sustained two periods of complete silence, from 1932 to 1943 and from 1946 to 1954. During those years he did not publish original poetry, but supported himself and his family through translations, creating masterpieces in this line of such power that his cousin, the eminent scholar, Olga Freidenberg, could say of his *Faust:* "You have changed the nature of translation, transforming it from a stranger dressed up in a Russian caftan into a fellow countryman with whom one communicates without the feeling of being away from home" (*Correspondence of Boris Pasternak and Olga Freidenberg, 1910–1954,* translated by Elliot Mossman, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982).

Pasternak translated works by some Georgian poets, Goethe, Shelley, Petöfi, Verlaine, and, of course, the plays of Shakespeare, among them, *King Lear, Othello, Antony and Cleopatra, Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Henry IV,* Parts I and II, *Macbeth, Richard II.* This exacting work was often done under the intense pressure of deadlines and financial need. Indeed, as he himself described it in September 1947: "God knows what mischief I've been up to, a barbarous and unforgiveable orgy. In five weeks I translated 2500 lines of Petöfi's lyrics (among them a narrative poem of 1500 lines) and I translated *King Lear* in a month and a half."

In this period, also, as we now know, Pasternak had begun to write what he referred to as a "prose novel," initially entitled *Boys and Girls.* He first mentioned this work, which was to encompass the "four decades from 1902 to 1946 in ten chapters," in a letter to his cousin Olga on October 5, 1946. "With intense absorption," he wrote, "I have already written one-fourth or one-fifth of what is planned. This is a very serious work. I am already old, I may soon die, and I must not perpetually put off

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giving free expression to my true thoughts." One week later, on October 13, in another letter he noted:

> I am writing a long novel in prose. It is, in fact, my first real work. In it I want to convey the historical image of Russia over the past forty-five years, and, at the same time, I want to express in every aspect of the story—a sad, dismal story, worked out in fine detail, ideally, as in a Dickens or Dostoevsky novel—my own views on art, the Gospels, the life of man in history and much more. . . . The mood of the piece is set by my Christianity, somewhat different and wider in scope than Quaker or Tolstoyan Christianity, deriving from various aspects of the Gospels in addition to the ethical aspect. All these matters are so important to me, and their varying colors arrange themselves so perfectly on the canvas within the outline that I have conceived, that I could not go on living another year unless this novel, my alter ego, in which with almost physical concreteness certain of my spiritual qualities and part of my nervous structure have been implanted, went on living and growing, too.

In a period of what, in another letter, he called "disintegrating forms of consciousness when all useful habits and all practical skills have lost their stability," the book provided him with what he had needed all his life. And he said that he was happy, "because I am free in spirit."

Throughout these days in the late 1940s and early 1950s, in the last terrible years of Stalin's reign, even when Pasternak's great friend Olga Ivinskaya was arrested, he continued to write the book in the spirit he had indicated. On December 31, 1953, he spoke of an earlier time: "When things were at their worst, I staked out for myself an independence for which I might have paid a terrible price at any time"; and, a week later, on January 7, 1954, he wrote: "It is surprising that I remained whole during the purges. You cannot imagine the liberties I allowed myself. My future was shaped in precisely the way I myself shaped it. I foresaw a great deal, and, more important, rejected much of it."

In April 1954, some new poems appeared in the fourth issue of *Znamia* (the Banner), and he alerted his cousin to this, remarking that "the words 'Doctor Zhivago' have now made their appearance on a contemporary page—like a hideous blot!" When, later, in November 1954, rumors circulated that he was being considered for the Nobel Prize, Pasternak told his cousin that his relations with officialdom were strained and that it was ". . . terrifying . . . to have attention drawn to me. On the least provocation they assume the right to ask me questions about my basic views, and there is no force on earth that can compel me to answer such questions in the way everyone else does. . . . It is expedient that I live secretly and withdrawn . . . and yet I have to think of the lives of my loved ones, of my unfinished novel, and of how to keep my position from becoming even more precarious."

The pressures mounted. Pasternak finished the book and, in the

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summer of 1956, submitted it for publication to the Soviet Writers Union. The manuscript was returned to him in September 1956, rejected, with a long and complex explanation. Though soon enough it became clear that this had been a false hope, for a time it appeared that publication in the Soviet Union might be possible if he were willing to make alterations.

All of this was to become known only much later. In the summer of 1957, the information given us was simply that this great poet had written a novel that was being translated in England and that our responsibility—our privilege, really—was to determine whether he truly wished this project to go forward or not.

And so we chose a day, my husband and I, a cold, gray, late September day. We somehow found the Kiev station and the local branch for the village of Peredelkino, about thirty-five kilometers from Moscow. People were already bundled up against the sharp, damp air, and our dun-colored raincoats blended with the general tone of dress. We hoped, futilely, not to be conspicuous and to be able to find our way without asking too many questions. But we had no notion how far Peredelkino might be or whether there would be signs indicating the tiny village. It was, in fact, clearly marked, and we left the train, a schematic map in hand. Instead of three clumps of trees, there was a veritable forest, each thicket enshrouding a dirt road. The map was of no use. Luckily, a large woman appeared along the road with a huge basket of laundry on her head. She showed us the "little village of the writers" and pointed out Pasternak's house.

On one side of the road stretched a potato field belonging to the collective farm; facing it was a wooden fence. Beyond the gate were thickets of tall grasses and untrimmed bushes, old flowers grown straggly and unkempt, clusters of weeds and brush. An almost invisible path led up to the two-story rambling house with its wide front porch. Except for a barrel of small, wizened apples, there was no sign of habitation or movement. No one responded to our knocks. Boldly, we peeked in the windows to see a rugless floor, a piano shut against the dust, a house seemingly closed for the season. We were desolated. The combination of excitement and tension, the need to be careful, the sense that any false move might be harmful, and the feeling of genuine awe at the thought of meeting this great artist all contributed to our disappointment at what we thought we saw.

A peasant woman suddenly appeared. "Who are you? What do you want?" she asked. We told her that we had come to visit Boris Leonidovich and, smiling, she replied, "He will return in an hour. He is in the woods picking mushrooms."

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In the interval we walked over the fields of the collective farm, wandered in the nearby woods, looking in vain for flower or branch that we might take back with us in greeting. But the harvest was in, and the bare ground yielded only goat droppings, appearing for all the world like so many plump berries. The landscape was empty, and yet, when we returned to the high fence and tousled yard, there stood an automobile and emerging from it, walking toward us, was the man whose hauntingly beautiful, sculptured face we would see photographed so frequently in the next few years. The questioning, surprised look immediately became warm and welcoming when he learned whence we had come and through whom. "Come in," he insisted, apologizing for having kept us waiting. He invited us to sit in a small room while he changed his clothes from forest gear to the well-known off-white lounging jacket that he always wore in the house.

The tiny chamber in which we found ourselves contained a desk, a couple of chairs, and a bookcase. The books and German magazines made us wonder where we were, as they were all about cars, racing cars of various models. We learned that they belonged to Pasternak's teen-aged son; still, it was startling to have come all this way for high literary purposes and meet up with standard adolescent fare of the Western world.

In a few minutes the poet reappeared and invited us to his study upstairs. Here, in a large room with windows at both ends, looking out over the desolate potato fields and woodlands, we talked with great animation for the next several hours. Boris Leonidovich sat at his writing table, my husband and I on chairs facing him. The room contained nothing else but a bookcase.

We were the first Americans to visit him, he said, and his contact with our culture was very limited. He knew little of American literature beyond the patchy and random exposure of educated Russians before World War I. How could we introduce the range and uniqueness of American literature to such a man? Of Melville and *Moby-Dick*, central in the development of American letters, he knew nothing and pressed me to describe it. So, in serviceable but hardly nuanced Russian, I discoursed as best I could on the symbolism of *Moby-Dick* and dominant themes in American literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, of Henry James, whose name was barely familiar to him, and others equally unsung in the USSR. Mark Twain, Edgar Allan Poe, Theodore Dreiser, of course he knew about, and Sinclair Lewis and Hemingway; but of Faulkner and the younger American writers he knew nothing.

The conjunction of fortuity and history, literature's unpredictable and unaccountable mobility, and the particular conditions of the Russian revolution explain, in part, why Pasternak was unacquainted with

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Melville and James and, by extension, with Kafka, whose major works appeared in German in the mid-1920s; with Sartre, whose *La Nausée* appeared in 1938, *L'Etre et le Néant* and *Les Mouches* in 1943; and with Camus, whose books were published in the 1940s. Isolated first by the war and then by the postwar Stalinist freeze, Soviet writers were privy largely to what filtered through the cracks. Still, long before the explicit attacks on "cosmopolitanism" associated with Zhdanov in 1946, even in the lively first decade after the revolution, when Soviet cultural life was particularly vivid and varied, the emotional and intellectual center of gravity for writers and artists was rooted in the revolution and its possibilities.

Our conversation on these very issues continued—carried on to my amazement and great self-consciousness in Russian—with this man whose translations of Shakespeare were said to be the equal of the playwright's original. Why, knowing English so well, did he insist on speaking Russian when, in addition, we had to translate for my husband? Apparently conversational English was not easy for him.

We spoke of literature and music and, obliquely, of life. In guarded, Aesopian language we talked of what had happened to literature in the Soviet Union, the meaning of the Soviet experience, the course of life since the revolution. Journalists tend to ask direct, impinging questions in their zeal for material. We could not bring ourselves to speak directly about painful things or to evoke specific memories of difficult times or lost friends. Anguish and sorrow lent a special beauty to Pasternak's highly mobile, sensitive face. To confront him, knowingly, with detailed reference was not possible, and so we referred to the past, as to the dead, by innuendo.

The most specific talk concerned the manuscript we had been sent to inquire about. As I have indicated, we knew only that there was one and that it was being translated into English. Did he really want this project to be completed and the book published outside the Soviet Union? "Without question," he replied with great conviction. "It does not matter what might happen to me. My life is finished. This book is my last word to the civilized world." The Russian people, he went on, have suffered terribly. After the French Revolution, the Thermidorian reaction lasted four years, but "for us, it has been forty." The cost must be made known. As for himself, he was prepared for the inevitable difficulties that the appearance of the book in the West might create. A cable would be sent with his signature, asking that the publication be stopped. It was to be ignored. "I must send it," he said, "but please, tell them to pay no attention."

At that moment his wife came into the room. It was our first glimpse of her—a round, dark, black-clad, rather Italian-looking woman. Speak-

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ing to him alone, she said that dinner was ready. Introduced to us she nodded and shook hands, showing neither interest nor warmth. Suddenly we felt superfluous and that we had stayed too long. At our rising to depart, our host said, "Come, let us go down to dinner, and please, do not speak in front of my wife of any of the things we have been discussing. She is afraid for me."

Downstairs the table was lavishly set with white cloth, wine and vodka glasses, cognac, dishes of pickles and cucumbers, bread, and many bottles. Toasts, jokes, and smiles replaced the somber colloquy in the writer's chamber. On the walls were the marvelous drawings of Leonid Osipovich Pasternak, the poet's father, drawings illustrating Tolstoy's *Resurrection,* and several Michelangelesque studies of the human torso and musculature. Behind Boris Leonidovich was the refrigerator; next to it was a Roman bust. In the doorway, arms akimbo, stood their peasant maid, in kerchief and with gold teeth, urging us to eat, commenting and laughing at the jokes. We, alone, were served the mushrooms, with sour cream, that our host had picked in the woods a few hours before. Mme Pasternak ate with what seemed compulsive seriousness. There had been so many years without food, she said, and she had been so thin. Now, she told us, when there was plenty, she could not stop eating. Like an addict, she kept her eyes fixed on the plates.

The talk was easy, varied—about daily routines, life in the country, in the city. Boris Leonidovich told us of his "jour fixe," Sunday afternoons "at home," when friends came and sat long hours over the food-laden table, talking and singing, reciting poetry and telling stories, eating and drinking. He warmly invited us to join them the next Sunday, apologizing for the time it would require for us to come that distance again.

On leaving, we asked if we might send him some books from the United States. He was delighted and told us to address them to him at the Soviet Writers Union. A packet was subsequently sent from the Harvard Cooperative Society, and when the reporters came in droves to visit him some months later, they found the Russian poet well provided with American literature—Melville, Whitman, James, Hemingway, Faulkner—as well as the European giants of the thirties and forties we had earlier carried to him by hand.

Boris Leonidovich walked with us down the dirt road past the collective farm, over the hill, to the railroad station. We stood under the trees waiting for the train to come, bade him good-bye, exchanged embraces with him, and departed.

Whether to return to Peredelkino the following Sunday for his "jour fixe" was a Hobson's choice. Somehow we felt that it might be harmful to this generous man if we came and were present at the table with whoever else might be there. However much we wanted to go, we

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decided, conservatively, not to risk compromising him in anyone's eyes by having American visitors.

The rest of the story is well known. Shortly after our visit, in November 1957, against the expressed wishes of Surkov, secretary of the Soviet Writers Union, the publisher Feltrinelli brought out the Italian edition of *Doctor Zhivago*. On our way home we passed on to the British publisher Pasternak's instruction to disregard the peremptory negative cable bearing his name, and a few months later, the English translation appeared.

The "civilized world," as Pasternak had himself described it, responded by awarding him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1958, an honor he first accepted and then had to refuse. Pasternak was expelled from the Soviet Writers Union amidst threats to drive him into exile. In renouncing the prize he wrote a personal letter to Khrushchev, asking to be allowed to stay in Russia. No reply was received to this letter apparently, but the outcry stopped.

In a letter to the *Manchester Guardian,* written on November 6, 1958—and quoted in Robert Conquest's *The Pasternak Affair*—Pasternak spoke again about his "last word to the civilized world":

> I have a feeling that a completely new era is beginning, with new tasks and new demands on the heart and on human dignity, a silent age which will never be proclaimed and allowed voice but will grow more real every day without our noticing it. That is why *Doctor Zhivago* is the most important piece of work I have been able to do so far in the whole of my life.

And, in response to a journalist, he remarked: "You have the right to ask me whether I believe what I have written. My answer is yes. I have borne witness as an artist; I have written about the times I lived through."

In this year, 1983, the Soviets have just published a volume of Pasternak's short prose, twenty-two years after his death. Perhaps this is the beginning of a break in his third long silence.

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Replacing the Elegy

Robert Pack

Suddenly the mountain air is cool;
the last opaque red streak of cloud
turns purple-gray
and settles in the stone-rimmed goldfish pool.
On the repeating slopes and rises
of the stubble field, the corded hay
draws in its shade;
as if on cue, bats wobble out
from underneath the eaves
in jagged circles like October leaves
clutching the wind; now half-asleep,
an oriole's last liquid nesting call,
loosely remembered,
trails off incomplete.

You leave the porch to get your shawl,
a moist glint in your eyes.
As if to occupy your space
with movement, your oak rocking chair leaps
after you, swings back, and starts
an agitated swaying in your place,
eases, gets quieter, creaks
almost imperceptibly awhile;
I cannot tell when it goes
absolutely still.
I hear your absence rising
from the misted hill.

You told me that before
your mother drowned herself, she said, "Wait here
right on this rock until
your father comes!" As dawn-light brightened,

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spreading through the mist,
you saw her waving from the lake; you knew
the whole day would be clear,
and ate the raisins
she had left for you.
"It seemed so natural," you said,
"nobody cried. The water looked so white.
My father's voice was softer than
I'd ever heard it
when I woke him up that night."

A goldfish pops the surface of the pool
which smooths out silver-black
as if to draw back
to itself its daylong images
of oak and maple leaves. I close my eyes,
trying to hold the goldfish
in my mind—an instant sunset spilling
upside down, a sunrise
in the underworld where everything
reverses and refills:
your mother swims back in the mist;
the baled hay leaks its shadows
in the field; a spattering of crows
appear above the hill,
their caws merge with the creaking of your chair.
Your shawl is wrapped around you—
you are there.

Maybe your mother heard the murmuring
of water lapping upon water,
thinking her mother's voice
was calling her?
I see you staring, sitting motionless
and silent on that mossy rock
as if you still were there,

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the white mist rising from the steady lake,
the early sunlight whitening
your loosened hair.
"We have to go home now,"
your shaking father must have said.
He reaches for your mother's face,
dissolving in the dark,
as he is putting you to bed.

And I can hear your father ask next morning
in the hazy light,
"Raisins or blueberries—what is your wish?"
as if each life can be replaced.
Among the windless leaves, still out of sight,
a pair of orioles begin to sing,
reminding me
his telling had it, you replied:
"I'd like a little bowl of everything."

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Call Me Ishmael

Or a Rose by Any Other Name

J. H. HEXTER

BUT THE TROUBLE IS THAT SOMETIMES they call you Ishmael even if you change your name to Hezekiah. And what the Bard said about a rose—well, I am not so sure. By bitter experience that young Montagu fellow found out differently, and so have I.

For example, in 1963 I faced a difficult choice. I could remain at Washington University in St. Louis or take a job at Yale. Washington was then, and still is, one of the most endearing of all American universities, a fine place to work. Breaking away from eighteen years of teaching the brightest students in the country at Queens College and jettisoning the cultural and intellectual advantages of the metropolis for a declining midwestern river town and a rather obscure university six years earlier had caused me few misgivings, and there was cause for none. I was willing to deprive myself of occasional discourse with an academic dean who said, "Dr. Hexter, you must understand that we are not opposed to research here at the College" (passive sabotage of scholarship), and with my department chairman who said to a friend of mine, "We don't want to appoint X. He's a scholar. Scholars make trouble" (active hostility to learning). I found myself happier dealing with crude middle western types who, during my brief tenure as chairman, had a standard response to my attempts to enhance the academic quality of the department of history by raising salaries, making paid leaves available for scholarly work, increasing the library budget, and firing untenured deadwood: "Let's see how we can help you." So six years later it was hard to decide whether to stay at Washington or, at the age of fifty-four, to go to Yale. It usually takes me around five minutes to make up my mind about anything. This time it took me five months. Having accepted Yale's offer and moved to New Haven in 1964, I won something less than the golden opinion of my new colleagues during the next two years by habitually referring to Yale as a collective "you" and to Washington University as

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"we." When I had finally chosen, I felt that I ought to explain my decision to my old friend the chancellor at Washington, Tom Eliot. My letter to him made most of the appropriate points—the great library at Yale, especially in my field of special interest, the concentration of old friends of mine in the short strip between Boston and Washington, the itchy feet that wanted me to try one more place before I got plowed under.

It was all true enough, but I still am not sure how close I got to the whole truth, especially how much a crisis, not of identity, but of identification had to do with it. A letter from a friend at the University of Edinburgh in 1957 may show where the trouble lay. I had written him that I was moving from Queens College to Washington University. He wondered whether I would like living in the nation's capital. "No, no! That's *George* Washington University." Or the dozen-odd casual acquaintances from the Atlantic Coast who, during my happy mid-American exile, asked me whether one felt isolated, way up in the northwest corner of the country so far away from everything. "No, *not* the University of Washington in Seattle! Washington University—in St. Louis, you know." "Oh, yes, of course."

I really don't know how much all this mattered to me; but I have a hunch that it would have mattered a good deal less had I not spent the previous eighteen years on the faculty of Queens College. "Queens College? How does a Yankee like you get along in the Black Belt?" "No, no, that is the Queens College in North Carolina. This Queens College is in New York City, a city college." "Ah, I know, New York *University*." "No, no, *not* New York University!" (It usually took at least five minutes to untangle this one.) Or: "Queens, eh? Are you going to give up your American citizenship?" "No, you are thinking of Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. I am at Queens College. In New York." "Oh-h?" (The "Oh-h?" always somehow conveyed its utterer's sense that a city slicker was trying to sneak a peculiarly metropolitan curveball past his sweet bucolic innocence.) Or most often: "Queens College? Wherezat?" "In New York." "New York City?" "Yes, sort of. Only it's not in Manhattan; it's on Long Island, you see, in the borough of Queens." "Oh, of course, Brooklyn." (To straighten this one out in ten minutes is a birdie. Usually it just does not get straightened out.) There are a lot of things you can say about Yale, and some are for and some are against; but one thing you can say for sure: When you tell someone you are at Yale, he does not ask: "In Lost Nation, Iowa?" or "In Painted Post, New York?" or "In Cambridge, Mass.?"

As I said, I do not know how much this silly consideration mattered when I made up my mind to go from Washington University (in *St. Louis*, you know) to Yale (*never* "in New Haven, you know"), but it may

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have mattered some. After all, twenty-five years of explaining where you are gets pretty tiresome.

A quarter of a century of confusion over the name of the place where I worked might have been more tolerable, if it had not gone in double harness with almost half a century of confusion about the name of the person I am. That confusion goes right on to the present moment, aided and abetted by officialdom, a couple of publishing houses, and a late bureaucrat named Barnaby Keeney. It began around 1910. Before I was old enough to know what my name was, somebody started fiddling with it, and ever since, with occasional remissions, the fiddling has recurred sporadically like undulant fever. We will start at the beginning.

I was born on May 25, 1910, in Memphis, Tennessee. In the beginning I was named Milton K. Hexter. My father's name was Milton J. Hexter. His J. stood for Jacobs, his mother's maiden name. My K. stood for Kaufman, my grandfather's first name. In a family whose traditions are notorious for their irrelevance to the facts in the case, the tradition was that I was not given the name Kaufman, but just the initial K., to spare me the peril of being called Junior. My feeling is that if my parents were all that considerate, they could have named me Bartholomew or Hieronymus to save me from being called Milton, but that does not seem to have occurred to them. It did occur to my twin cousins Marian and Betsy Gates, who lived across Pauline Street from us in Memphis. They would have none of Milton. Before I can remember, they simply renamed me Jack. There is not even the customary inaccurate family tradition to explain why they hit on that particular name; but it not only stuck, it spread. Nobody in my family has ever called me anything but Jack, unless you want to count an occasional Jackie-Boy, which I do not.

Anyway, the successful campaign of the twins inaugurated the first period of nomenclatural tranquility in the turbulent history of my name: for all practical purposes I was plain Jack Hexter for five years. The peaceful time ended when my grandmother, Fannie Marks, who raised me, enrolled me in kindergarten at Avondale School in Cincinnati. Although neither before nor after did she herself ever call me anything but Jack, at this crucial point she suffered an inexplicable atavism; she signed me in to school as Milton K. Hexter. The results were appalling. Around the house, in the family, and among my close friends I was Jack. To all my teachers from kindergarten through the sixth grade I was Milton. Between the two was a broad spectrum of schoolmates who called me Milt, or, even worse, Miltie. It was a nerve-racking situation, one which doubtless has left on my psyche a hideous mass of scar tissue.

It was also a situation that I radically rectified at the earliest opportunity. That opportunity came in the seventh grade when I went from Avondale School to Walnut Hills High School. My grandmother did

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not come with me to louse things up on the day I enrolled. I seized the chance and signed myself in as Jack Hexter, thus restoring the *status quo ante kindergarten*. It was a bold move for freedom and on the whole a very successful one. Of course, there were a few pockets of Milton left that needed mopping up—several schoolmates at Avondale who had to be corrected or avoided, the teachers at Sunday School who never did get squared away, and, most persistent of all, the Peoples' Bank, which eleven years later firmly closed its doors on the Bank Holiday of 1933, with the account of Milton K. Hexter inside, and never opened them again. But taken all in all, the period that began when I enrolled at Walnut Hills was the longest stretch of nomenclatural peace I have ever enjoyed. It lasted through my six years there, through three years at the University of Cincinnati, and four in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Harvard. (The dean of the graduate school had some trouble with "Jack" in working out the Latin names on the M.A. diploma and wrote to ask me whether I preferred Johannes or Jacobus. I forget what I told him, and the only evidence, the diploma itself, is long lost. Anyway, that was the dean's problem, not mine.)

My trouble started again one unfortunate evening in my fourth year of graduate work when I went to a meeting of the Graduate History Club. (The History Club was mainly for the canaille, of whom I was one. It was open to all graduate students in history, and it was a very dull organization. The Star Chamber, the other graduate history club, was just as dull, but more exclusive; it was open only by invitation. I was not invited.) At History Club meetings we listened to a paper usually by a faculty member or a distinguished visiting fireman. When it was over, we stood around and wondered whether a faculty member would speak to us. This rarely happened; faculty members at Harvard were not much addicted to speaking to graduate students in the good old days.

For me that particular meeting was a catastrophic exception to the rule. Professor Wilbur Abbott emerged out of the haze of ennui and unease surrounding me, planted himself squarely before me, cleared his throat, and mumbled something. I did not quite catch it, or at least did not want to think I had quite caught it. He seemed to be saying something about changing my name.

"Pardon me?"

"I said you'd better change your name."

"Change my *name*?"

"Yes, change your name!"

"But I don't want to change my name, sir."

"Better change it anyhow." He was stubborn.

"But, sir, there's nothing wrong with the name Hexter." I, too, was stubborn.

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"Oh, Hexter is all right. It's Jack that's the trouble. It won't do."

"What's wrong with Jack? I don't see anything wrong with Jack either." After all, it was a name I had fought and bled a good deal for.

"It won't do." Still stubborn.

"But what is wrong with it?" I, too, was stubborn still.

"I'll tell you what's wrong with it, Hexter," said Professor Abbott reasonably but wearily and with obviously diminishing patience. "Someday you may be a pretty good historian. No one will believe that anybody named Jack is a good historian."

I must admit that I never thought I would have to face such a problem. In this matter, as in a good many others, Professor Abbott was eccentric. None of his colleagues in the department of history shared his temperately roseate view of my prospects. It was a point on which, on the face of the evidence, I inclined to the opinion of the overwhelming majority. In my first year as a graduate student in history at Harvard, after majoring in English at the University of Cincinnati, I had but an A, a couple of A−'s, and five B-level grades, one B−− in Renaissance and Reformation. In a place where two B's were taken to show that a graduate student was a basket case, I had dropped out of the bottom of the basket.

"But, Professor Abbott, let's face it; I may not be a good historian," I replied, hiding my future indicative convictions under a subjunctive cushion. "Then I'll have changed my name for nothing. And I like being called Jack. I am just the sort of fellow people call Jack."

He firmed his jaw slightly. "Well, that's too bad. Still, you are going to have to change it."

The time had obviously come for a retreat to unprepared lines. Abbott was my dissertation supervisor; and undue intransigence about such a trifle as one's name was not advisable if it ran counter to the orders of one's supervisor. I thought hard and fast.

"Look, how about my using a middle initial?"

"What good would that do?"

"Well, then I could just sign what I wrote with my first and second initials and my last name."

He turned this idea slowly over in his mind. Then a little grudgingly, "I guess that might work. What is your middle name?"

"I haven't got one," I said. I said it fast, because I was not sure it was true. In the multiple metamorphoses of my names I was not quite certain about the current ontological status of K. for Kaufman, but I did know for sure that I wanted no further truck with it. I certainly did not want to go into the philosophical problem it raised with Professor Abbott. Anyhow, I thought I had him stymied. But not for long.

"I have a spare one," he said.

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"Pardon?"

"I have a spare middle name. I don't use it. You could have it."

"I don't really want a middle name, Sir, just a middle initial."

"All right. I won't give you the name. The initial is H., you can use that."

"Thank you, Sir," I said.

"You are welcome," he replied.

And that was that. We both were good to our side of the bargain. Professor Abbott never told me what his middle name was, then or later. Neither has anyone else, so I don't know what the H. stands for. And from that day to this I have done my damnedest to transform myself into J. H. Hexter for official and professional purposes, while hanging on to Jack in personal relations, as per agreement.

The trouble is—let's face it—I have failed. The fight that I thought was won and over when Professor Abbott and I reached our compromise settlement was for me just a beginning that now, nearly fifty years later, has not ended. But the returns are really in; this is one I am not going to win. The time remaining to me is too short; there is too much going against me, and there always has been—the random flak, the publishers, the bureaucrats, the family, and the late Barnaby Keeney.

The random flak can come from almost anywhere, mainly from people who do not know what the J. stands for, but are willing to back their guess—like Tom Cochran at Penn to whom, for three decades, I was James or Jim according to no discernible principle. (Under these circumstances I thought it a little much when the term he chose to describe a book of mine he reviewed was "idiosyncratic.") Or Tom Easterbrook at Toronto, who always called me Jack but who, when he sent the program of the Economic History Association meeting to the printer in 1957, opted for John H.

With publishers it is different; they have defeated me by the massive force of sheer stupidity. By 1967 I had written four books, and they had issued two with my name wrong. In 1962 Longmans in England published my *Reappraisals in History*. The galley proofs came in—*John* H. Hexter on the title page. I made the appropriate correction—J. H. Hexter. The page proofs, when they came, had it right—J. H. Hexter. The book came—J. H. Hexter on the title page; J. H. Hexter on the dust jacket; all was well. A few days after I got my author's copies, one slipped out of my hand. The dust jacket slid off. There, smirking at me from the spine of the book, was John (no middle initial) Hexter. And then in 1966, Harper and Row published *The Judaeo Christian Tradition*—by J. A. Hexter. I don't know what the A. stands for, but then I don't know what the H. stands for either. It is just that I committed myself to it a long while back and that I would like a touch of name

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stability and identifiability in my declining years. In my next three books they got the name right, but those books have gone out of print. (I seem to get worse as I grow older.) Of the ones still in print, that leaves me three out of five, or 600, in a league where most players can anticipate a lifetime average of 1000. I can't catch up.

With the bureaucrats, private and public, I never can tell in advance. Banks, academic administrations, and the Veterans Administration are reasonable. J. H. is okay with them on bank deposits and checks, and in university catalogues. The wartime army would not take J. H. or Jack H. I had to be plain Jack. They did not believe in initials and especially not in a middle initial with no name hooked on to it. It might have been different if Harry S. (for nothing) Truman had been commander in chief when I was inducted in 1942; but D. stood for Delano, didn't it, so what the hell did H. stand for? Insurance companies, title guarantee companies, the Internal Revenue Service, and the passport office tolerate the H., but they want a first name, and they won't take no for an answer. And willy-nilly at the end of all my earthly tribulation, I will have to reconcile myself with dying Jack H. Hexter. That is the way the lawyers and the trust company said it had to be, and that is the way it is in my last will and testament.

The family got its licks in early. A year after the Abbott-Hexter pact, I was—given my academic record at Harvard—predictably unemployed. I headed for England for several months of research. That raised the need for a passport. The passport office insists on having evidence that you have been born and that you are you. The authorities in Memphis, perhaps with prescient intimations that my name was Big Trouble had lost track of my birth certificate, or burned its vital statistics for 1910, or fed them to the rats. So my father had to submit an affidavit that, to the best of his knowledge and belief, I was born and I was I. What he submitted was an affidavit that Milton K. Hexter was born and that I was Milton K. Hexter. So that long-buried ghost rose again and tried to start a new life for himself via my new passport. He never really had a chance; I was not about to give him one. He survived his reanimation, however, just long enough to make a damn nuisance of himself by setting me on a collision course with the American Express Company.

The trouble boiled up over the Christmas checks from my grandmother, my father, and my three aunts. They were made out to five different fellows named Hexter. My grandmother had gotten the terms of the pact straight. Hers was to J. H.; Father's was to Milton K.; Aunt Carrie's was to Jack; Aunt Cora's to Jack H.; and Aunt Gertie, vague to the last, sent hers to J. M. (She should have been a publisher.) There followed a series of unnerving confrontations with a minor executive at American Express in London, as the checks came in one by one, and I

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tried to cash them one by one. It was clear enough to the executive that I was I; the question was who was I, and how was I related to all those other fellows named Hexter, who were getting checks from people named severally Marks, Hexter, Guggenheim, Frauenthal, and Mook. And considering the circumstances, how much confidence did I expect him to have in my bare assertion that all the check-receiving Hexters were I and I they? There was a sort of mounting crisis of confidence each time I showed up at the Haymarket office with a new variation on the Hexter theme. It reached its crescendo on the fourth check and somehow abruptly descended to diminuendo on the fifth. By then my claim to be all those Hexters attained a measure of credibility through the sheer excess of its own preposterousness.

It was during my stay in London and after the Christmas trouble that unwittingly I set in train the nomenclatural disaster associated with the late Barnaby Keeney. I was feeling pretty good at the time. Those checks with all those names on them had turned into nice negotiable pounds and shillings, after all. As far as my name went, the worst was over, I thought. At the moment the story of how I acquired it might make a mildly amusing yarn. In that spirit and in all innocence, I told it one day at lunch to two acquaintances from Harvard, Ted Lampson and John Coddington, who, like me, were doing research in the British Museum. My guess was right; they were mildly amused. They were also mildly curious.

"I wonder what the H. stands for," said John.

"Yes, I wonder," said Ted.

I answered that I neither wondered nor cared.

"Wilbur Abbott," Ted mused, "Wilbur C. Abbott. He kept the C. and dropped the H. What does the C. stand for?"

"Cortez," said John, who was always up on things like that. "Wilbur Cortez Abbott."

"Wilbur Cortez Abbott. Wilbur Cortez H. Abbott. Wilbur H. Cortez Abbott," Ted continued, trying them out for size.

"Wilbur *H. Cortez* Abbott!" said John, infernal enlightenment glowing in his eyes. "Of course! Well, well. I'll be damned."

"Of course," Ted exclaimed. "That's it. That has to be it!"

"What has to be what?" I said, a little irked. They were too old to be giggling that way. "What the hell is so funny?"

"Your middle name, my boy, your middle name," said John.

"What middle name? I don't have any middle name."

"Oh, yes, you do, my boy," said Ted. "Yes, you do, my old conquistador!"

"Your old what?"

"Wilbur Cortez Abbott," John explained patiently. "Wilbur *H.* Cortez

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Abbott. *H.* Cortez. Hernando Cortez. Jack, my friend, your middle name is Hernando."

"Jack Hernando Hexter," Ted murmured. "Ah, well, into each life some rain must fall. *Hasta la vista.*"

"I'm off too. Don't take it too hard, J. H.," said John. "Bite the bullet."

I was not in any hurry to go. I felt the need to sit around a while and get myself adjusted to what the world would be like for a man who was moving toward his thirties with the newly acquired middle name of Hernando. On the whole, the prospect did not seem promising. I remembered a friend once telling me about a vagrant uncle who, he said, "suddenly turned up dead in Bellevue." I could not quite make out why, but somehow that uncle's predicament and mine seemed similar. Of course, there was always a chance that Ted and John were wrong. It didn't *have* to be Hernando. There were after all *hundreds* of names that began with H. *Of course.* The trouble was that of all those names, the one most likely to be found in company with Cortez was Hernando. I could not figure any way around that, because there was no way around it.

Moreover, at the time I couldn't do anything about it. There was no way of checking on it. I was going to France in about two weeks; sea mail to America was the only kind of mail there was in those days, and in the winter it always took more than two weeks for sea mail to do a round trip from London to Cambridge, Mass. No mail would reach me in France. It would be well over a month before I could get back to Cambridge. And anyhow I was not really sure I wanted to find out. I was stuck dead center between discomfort with the uncertainty and discomfort at the notion that uncertainty might be better than the possible awful truth—like the man who is not sure he wants to hear the doctor's diagnosis for fear that the disease may be mortal. I settled down as well as I could to living with the suspense. It gave me a poignant insight into what a rotten deal poor old Damocles had.

I wasted no time after the boat docked in New York. I took the first train out for Boston, deposited my traveling bags and my case of Scotch in the flat of Cliff Mannal, off whom I was sponging, and was inside Abbott's office by 3:00 P.M. The boss was not there, but his secretary, Catherine Crane, was.

I did not waste any time on ceremonious exchanges of greetings. "Look," I said to her, "is his name Hernando?"

"Hello, Jack, did you have a nice trip?" said Mrs. Crane.

Her sense of the proprieties and priorities was preposterous. "Yes, great," I answered. "Is his name really Hernando?"

"Is whose name what?"

"His. Professor Abbott's. Is it Hernando?"

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"Professor Abbott's?"

"Yes. That middle initial he doesn't use any more. H., you know. Does it stand for Hernando?"

"Why should it? Oh, I get it—Cortez. No, it doesn't. As a matter of fact, it's not Wilbur H. Cortez; it's Wilbur Cortez H. The H. stands for . . . "

"Whoa. Hold it. I don't want to know what the H. stands for. I just wanted to know one thing it didn't stand for—Hernando. You've taken a load off my mind. Thanks."

"You're welcome. Now, to get back to where I started, how was your trip?"

I told her in somewhat greater detail than before how the trip was. I also told the now-extended and improved story of my troubles with my name to quite a lot of people. Not the Milton part. I had buried that in the American Express office in the Haymarket, and I wanted no more to do with it. Just the story of the H. and the Lampson-Coddington discovery of what, happily for me, turned out to be fool's gold. What harm could telling that do? So I told it to my girl, Marion, and my roommates, Cliff Mannal and Herb Robbins, and my friend Wex, and to Ed Popper, and to a somewhat raffish acquaintance, Barney Keeney, once a pretty good distance runner at the University of North Carolina, who was transmuting himself into a pretty good medievalist at Harvard. . .

Early in 1964, I got a letter from Doctor Barnaby C. (for Conrad) Keeney, President of Brown University, A.B. (North Carolina), A.M., Ph.D. (Harvard), D.Sc. (Bryant College), L.H.D. (Ohio University), Ed.D. (Rhode Island College of Education), LL.D. (eleven assorted institutions, including Providence [R.I.] College and the University of Rhode Island—Dr. Keeney was obviously Big in Rhode Island, but then Rhode Island is not a very big state), and J. D. from Portia Law School, where I assume he played Shylock. He had come a long piece from his birthplace in Halfway, Oregon. I had not lost track of Dr. Keeney in his years between graduate school and university presidency. I ran into him at the first American Historical Association meeting I attended after I got my first permanent job at Queens. He was an instructor at Harvard. It was late afternoon, and I had just arrived.

"Hi, Barney," I said.

"Hi, Jack," said Barney. "You look thirsty."

"*We* look thirsty."

"You had better check your bag first." I checked my bag. I unchecked it reasonably early the next morning.

From that time on, with an intermission for the war in which I was a stateside soldier and Barney some kind of hero, we dedicated ourselves for more than a decade to preventing the spirits of the AHA from drying

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up. Years later I even attended Barney's installation as president of Brown. At the previous meeting of the AHA when the news of the improbable appointment was out, Mary Handlin and I put in a good bit of time lamenting in Barney's presence his imminent apotheosis into a stuffed shirt, an unselfish concern for his spiritual condition that he did not appear fully to appreciate. So when I found out that I could hit Queens College, where I taught then, for the expense of my trip to Providence, I figured I ought to go for auld lang syne. It was quite an occasion, made special not by the mass of dull dignitaries who are always around for such affairs but by the presence of a sizable delegation of Barney's old cronies, an assortment of odd characters who felt a personal interest in the proceedings. Most of them ordinarily would have headed for the hills at the faintest suggestion that anyone might try to rope them into attending the installation of a university president. With Barnaby it was different. None of those who knew him best could believe that he would actually make it, unless they saw him do it with their own eyes. Among them were a considerable number with a financial interest in the affair. They had laid long odds against anything so improbable happening. They were not about to pay off on a base of evidence as flimsy and unreliable as a newspaper report. They had to see the event happen with their naked eye. There are even rumors that a few who sat through the whole ceremony still required affidavits before they would settle up, on the grounds that there are occasions when reason and probability require a man to reject the evidence of his senses.

Barnaby made it, however, and no doubt just to falsify Mary Handlin's and my prophecy, he did not turn into a stuffed shirt. The consensus is that he provided Brown with a highly individual, somewhat eccentric, but most successful administration for ten years. One who suffered, enjoyed, and survived administration à la Keeney tried to catch its peculiar flavor, to describe what it was like for a faculty member. "It was," he said meditatively, "like being on a wild ride on an endless roller coaster, not having the slightest idea what the hell was going to happen next, yet knowing deep down that you were as safe as gold in Ft. Knox. Barney had the singular gift of going square down the middle of the road and making everybody with him believe it was Wonderland."

I did not completely lose touch with Barnaby even after he became a university president. In 1958 he asked me to teach a summer class at Brown. When I accepted, he offered me and my family lodging in the president's house, which he would not be occupying during our stay. After I explained to him my intention to rent rooms and to erect a modest neon sign, "Presidential Motel," at the gate, he chickened out. Instead he provided us with quarters in a faculty suite in a new dormitory complex with arrangements for us to extend occupancy as far down the

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corridor as our hospitality to visiting friends required. His subsequent claims that we filled a whole floor and that after our tenancy the cost of repairs came to twice my pay is at least half false; we never had more than fifteen people in at one time. And his point about repairs merely reflected the meagerness of my summer salary.

So when I got a letter from President Keeney early in 1964, I was not surprised. I was surprised at its contents—and pleased. It invited me to speak for a half hour at the Brown Bicentennial Celebration in October in return for a fairly princely stipend. In my letter of acceptance, I indicated that in view of the disproportion of the reward to the service demanded, I assumed that some small kickback was expected and that I was ready to be reasonable. I also pointed out to him that he might find it embarrassing if his board of trustees learned how deep his hand was into the till. Of course, no blackmail threat was intended. Still, when a few days later a further letter offered to cut the stipend in half and indicated that in any case an honorary degree of D. Litt. was to be thrown in with it, I did speculate on the possibility of a cause and effect relation. On this point, as it turned out, I was entirely on the wrong track. Barnaby had other reasons.

On October 4 the convocation of Brown University gathered to hear President Lyndon B. Johnson deliver an address and to witness the granting of honorary degrees on the occasion of the university's two-hundredth anniversary. Among those listed to receive such degrees was J. H. Hexter, Ph.D., Professor of History, Yale University. He had a seat in the front row. President Johnson delivered his brief address, announcing plans for the provision of federal funds for the support of the humanities (reasonably wild applause led by faculty members engaged in literary and historical research). Then having more pressing business to attend to at the moment (namely, the efficient and massive clobbering of poor dear Senator Goldwater), President Johnson departed before the awarding of the honorary degrees. About half an hour later the marshal got down the list as far as my name.

"Professor J. H. Hexter, come forward."

I walked up the steps to the platform and stood face-to-face with Dr. Barnaby C. Keeney. The marshal went on to utter some further ceremonial formulae. I did not catch what he said. I was anxiously scrutinizing Barnaby and was apprehensive about what I saw. He had added considerable poundage since his elevation to the presidency of Brown, and encased in gorgeous academic robes, he looked like an unreliable Irish rogue elephant, swathed in a brown and orange silk tent, with a brown tam-o'-shanter unsteadily perched on its head. He had a glitter in his eye, at once steely and wild, that I had seen often enough before to know it boded no good. There was trouble ahead, no doubt, but I could

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not figure what. The marshal had finished saying whatever he had said.

Barnaby stared at me like a basilisk and intoned, "Jack HERNANDO Hexter." He came down on the second name like a pile driver.

He continued with the citation preceding the granting of the degree, but again I missed it. I was choked by an incompatible mixture of emotions—astonishment, fury, shock, and admiration. It was a first for Barnaby, all right. He was the first university president in history to give somebody an honorary degree entirely for the sake of a one-line gag. It was at least symptomatic of a strange but splendid character disorder. I had just gotten that far in my meditation when someone draped over my shoulders the Brown University hood of a D. Litt. At the same moment Barnaby released into my left hand the engraved leather-bound copy of the citation he had just recited. He beamed at me with what from the spectator's angle of vision must have looked like benevolence. I tilted slightly forward on the balls of my feet, beamed back with what from the spectator's point of view must have looked like affection, and said to him between clamped teeth, "Barney, you son of a bitch."

Now I had a first to my credit. I was the first Doctor of Letters in history who at the very moment of receiving the degree had called the man who presented it to him a son of a bitch. Barnaby, still beaming, took my right hand in his and shook it with apparent warmth at the same time saying, "Easy, Jack, it's an open mike." I returned to my seat.

It was an open mike all right. Not, fortunately, to the audience in the hall, but to the broadcasting network that was carrying the bicentennial ceremonies. Barnaby wrote me a note a few days later to assure me that we actually had been on the air, a fact subsequently confirmed by other and more reliable witnesses. He also chided me for what he described as my "vile language" and ended his letter, "Well, Jack, you will long be remembered in these Plantations." I tended to think that he might be right, but I did not feel very badly about it. In a day of firsts, I had perhaps scored the crowning one. I realize that my initial attempt fully to comprehend the dimensions of my achievement by comparing it with that of Herostratus, who burned the Temple of Diana at Ephesus, was not quite appropriate. That is indeed a thing that could be done only once. It is at least possible that at some future time another recipient of an honorary degree at the moment of receiving it will call the president who awards it to him a son of a bitch in the hearing of an audience that potentially includes a large part of the population of southern New England. Possible, but on the whole, I think, not very likely.

From a merely dramatic point of view, the story should end here. Unfortunately for me, I am not a dramatist, but a historian. I cannot choose to end my story at the point most appropriate to the exigencies of dramatic presentation; I am bound to fidelity to the historical record.

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And that record requires me to press further, since it unmistakably shows that in fact the story did not end here.

In 1965 Dr. Barnaby Keeney resigned as president of Brown University. In that year Lyndon Johnson recommended support for the humanities to Congress, making good on his pledge at the Brown bicentennial. In that year, to no one's great surprise, Dr. Barnaby Keeney was appointed the first director of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Before he fled to Washington, I went to Providence to see Barney. I had business with him. We conducted it somewhat erratically in the intervals between Barney's shots in a game of bottle pool, in which he was efficiently massacred by an associate professor. While ill-naturedly taking his lumps, Barney limped about the table alibiing his hopeless performance. Implausibly he claimed that he was handicapped by lack of practice and a game leg, which he alleged he had gotten while fishing in Honduras. His story was received with undisguised and scornful skepticism by the academic slaves over whom he no longer held the whip hand.

Despite a few difficulties of communication caused by Barney's preoccupation with the game, the two of us had an almost immediate meeting of minds. It was a pure case of symbiosis. Each of us had something the other needed. I had a sound sensible project for editing at Yale the parliamentary diaries for the Parliament of 1628, the Parliament that passed the Petition of Right, which was later to become a basis for the claims to liberty of the British colonists in North America. Barney needed and wanted projects for the National Endowment of which members of Congress could readily make sense. For this purpose my project was a natural. I needed and wanted money. As director of the Endowment, Barney would soon have money. The match of our reciprocal purposes was so evident that we had finished our business well before Barney's disaster at the pool table had wound to its dreary consummation.

In September 1966 the National Endowment announced its grant of $35,980 to Yale University for the editing of the parliamentary diaries for 1628. I received what purported to be the press release of the Endowment's announcement of the grant. I here quote verbatim an excerpt from the document I received.

"Because of its importance to the history of American constitutional rights, the National Endowment for the Humanities today announced a grant of $35,980 to Yale University to initiate a project, under the direction of Jack Hernando Hexter, Professor of History (who is best known for his book, *Reappraisals in History,* which consists in good part of articles rejected by leading journals) to edit the manuscripts, . . . " I showed the document to my wife. We were both amused by it. It was

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obviously a gag release faked by Barney for our entertainment. He was a man who would go a long way for a joke. A few days later I received from Congressman Mathias a kind note congratulating me on the award of funds for the project. It began,

Professor Jack Hernando Hexter
Department of History
Yale University

The Shadow had struck again.

I am nearing age seventy-three and back at Washington University in St. Louis. In the past quarter century I have done myself two strokes, two coronary occlusions, two major hemorrhages, three bouts of pneumonia, and one dental extraction. It figures that I will be getting off the train pretty soon. Though hell on wheels for most, it has been a good trip for me, made more lively on occasion by encounters with Barney Keeney. No more of those though. He detrained himself a few years back. Stroke.

As to the Bard, on thinking it over, he had the thing part right and part not so right. It is, I would agree, true that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but then I don't spend much time smelling roses. All the same, there is something in a name, and as long as there are the likes of Montagus and Barnaby Conrad Keeneys around, there will continue to be something in a name. A name, for instance, like J. (FOR JACK, NOT JOHN) (NOT MILTON K. OR MILTON KAUFMAN) H. (NOT FOR HERNANDO BUT FOR GOD AND CATHERINE CRANE ONLY KNOW AND I DON'T WANT TO KNOW WHAT) HEXTER.

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What Happened to Respectability?

ROBERT ERWIN

I WISH I HAD SOME SLIDES with which to show readers born after 1950 what a strong cultural norm looks like. They have been mostly subjected to the portfolio mode of culture. Sell migrant workers and buy lesbians. Keep an eye on the peregrine falcon for potential growth in the environmental sector. As safe investments with a steady yield, you'll do well with beer and exercise. College degrees are down slightly. The only widely shared conception of the common good now is sufficient order and support so that trading may continue.

Respectability—the successor to nobility after the French and American revolutions—stands as a good example of a once-strong norm. Achievement and character across class, occupation, sex, region, and ethnic group were measured by it for nearly two centuries. The strength of respectability was indicated in part by sheer staying power. It lasted through industrialization, further revolutions, and two world wars.

The degree to which the ideal was internalized also indicates its strength. Richard Nixon seems classic as well as villainous when he wears a suit, pressed and buttoned, to board a private airplane. Elliott Gould seems only show-biz carbonated when, smiling sweetly and wearing a ratty football jersey, he tells a national television audience that he is glad to host "Saturday Night Live" because the program, in his words, "has balls." You cannot imagine, Class of 1975, what fright, embarrassment, and hostility Gould's breaking of a taboo would have triggered in the heyday of respectability. Millions upon millions of "decent" people in 1860 or 1960 went from one year to the next rarely speaking, hearing, or reading such words in the open.

To make the point, against Gould's effervescence can be set a humorless passage from the Judgment Day section of James T. Farrell's *Studs Lonigan*, received as incendiary realism when it was published in the 1930s. In this scene a housewife with a baby is about to take on four strangers for $2.50 each in her apartment to recoup the grocery money she lost to a bookie. When Studs draws high card for first turn with her

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and one of the others says "Leave a little for us," she becomes indignant. "This is my house," she snaps. "Get out if you're going to talk lewd." No, propriety was not a matter of wealth and education only. Tamara Hareven's interviews with Amoskeag mill workers contain little "off-color" talk, although most of these men and women left school early and were poor all their lives.

Of course even genteel kids did learn the other language by hook or crook. Taboos have to do with the forbidden, not necessarily the unknown. Some of them, on the sly, managed a passable imitation of the toughest kid in town, destined to go directly from grammar school to prison. The boys often encountered an authority—a straw boss, a coach—who used rough language that impressed them. Later, facility in the other language might come in handy for coping with or surviving among troops, laborers, tenants. Half the appeal of going to barrooms, brothels, pool halls, and cooch shows lay in upholding the norm by breaking taboos in a place prescribed for that purpose. Usually by a more subterranean route, girls arrived at an equivalent "secret" knowledge, though in some ways a worse state of duplicity.

An additional indication of the strength of respectability as a cultural norm is the fact that it fought its way to the top against a powerful older norm—the premodern concept of nobility, once a label for both high status and high character. The word and its correlates are moribund now, used primarily in a fustian, jocular, or pretentious way. Not all that long ago, however, nobility referred concretely to a ruling class with definite requirements for membership, with powers conferred by custom and statute, and with control over weapons, resources, and symbols around which society was organized. To justify its position, the aristocracy loaded the word with all-purpose moral connotations. It could serve as an ideal, and it could cloak exploitation. Holiness rivaled nobility, but the high-born could become pillars of the church as well. In brief, nobility was well designed to satisfy the three passions distinguished by Kant: for possession, for power, and for honor—even to the extent of satisfying those who did not benefit personally that this was an acceptable way to ration these passions. Although orators and writers wore out *noble* as a metaphorical praise word in the nineteenth century, traces of its strength remain. Prince Charles and Princess Grace cause a flutter in the media. Many people treasure their "right" to be addressed as Madame, Esquire, Signore, Dr., and the like.

A further and principal indicator of the strength of respectability was how well it worked. True, it "suited conditions." Wealth and activity drained out of landowning and into industry, commerce, and technology. Functionaries and plutocrats replaced the aristocracy. Nobility had embodied a strategy whereby the few should live well for the many. As

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industrialization proceeded, population grew, roles multiplied, and modern ideas sank in. Something else was needed to encourage predictable, "responsible" behavior among segmented, atomized citizens. For stratified democracies or administered authoritarian states, respectability filled the bill. Textbooks notwithstanding, however, Marxist or otherwise, conditions do not automatically generate a successful response, any more than playing a game ensures that you will win. Respectability was a norm that molded conditions as well as suited them. For a long time in the constellation that included respectability, such things as constitutional order, the containment of typhoid and starvation, the abolition of slavery, and the spread of literacy were noticeable. With such hopeful signs, no wonder colonial administrators in folklore wore dinner jackets in the jungle.

Unlike nobility or pregnancy, respectability could be divided and redefined expediently. To spend one's life laying trolley track or packing candy did not preclude wearing a starched collar on Sunday and subscribing in principle to "clean living," "proper behavior." Such behavior could be demanded by the eminently respectable from the barely respectable, or it could be rewarded with token esteem (address the washerwoman as Mrs. and praise her disapproval of spitting). According to current needs for cheap labor, dirty work, scapegoats, and disenfranchisement, the line could be redrawn at the bottom, denial of respectability justifying any discrimination practiced against minorities, immigrants, and newly subjugated peoples.

"Neatness" and swaddling the body in clothes gave the right tone to respectability. Purchases instead of skills. Prim gestures and speech—the very opposite of "drunk as a lord." Conformity and obsessive regularity. Endless hours of self-improvement. In the guise of respectability, puritanism could be imposed without religion. With fewer feudal honorifics and bourgeois top hats, these manners proved useful in fascist and communist settings as well as capitalist ones. The ragged and the trashy were everywhere condemned.

An aspect of this matter that readers born after 1950 should make an extra effort to understand is cultural coherence—the extent to which anti-norms and departures from the norm were framed as deliberate contraries and exceptions rather than helter-skelter differences. By the 1830s certain social groupings that were modern but opposed to respectability had entered the configuration.

Bohemians, on the whole sufficiently educated and sufficiently mobile to qualify for respectability had they the inclination, in fact made an issue of rejecting respectability in the conviction that they knew better than respectables how to live. The classic bohemians ranked themselves as aristocrats of the spirit, the elite few with intellect,

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imagination, taste, and moral courage. Sometimes aestheticism swayed bohemia. The cultivated dandy appeared more elegant, witty, knowing, and above all interesting than any solid citizen. At other times anti-materialism became the dominant theme in bohemia. Dull respectables who cared about pensions, baths, and curtains were ridiculed and despised. At yet other times a "wild" mode ruled bohemia—drugs, outlandish costumes and living arrangements, links with the underclass, living on the edge.

Other out-groups found themselves opposed to (or opposed by) respectability, not because their aim was to rise above it or even to question it, but because they lived in peculiar circumstances. History and ethnicity may have pushed them to the margin, as in the case of Gypsies. Certain occupations were categorically looked down on by the respectable—as in the case of actors, dancers, and circus performers. Sheer physical removal from the centers of respectability affected the likes of sailors, cowboys, and white hunters. Sensing that they had little to gain from "good behavior" (at best the sort of crumbs tossed to the washerwoman), pimps, hustlers, gangsters, gamblers, and fixers of various kinds followed a different, but in many ways derivative, code within the underclass.

For a long while, contact between the nominally respectable and the categorically unrespectable was minimal. Enclaves opposed to respectability were cordoned off. In the spirit of smugglers, some conventional-minded people crossed the border for illegitimate pleasure or profit. Novelists, dramatists, journalists, and moralists supplied stereotypes in place of contact—stereotypes of long-haired bohemians, bomb-throwing reds, Wild West outlaws, wanton actresses, rascally "sporting men," and so on. In a sense, however, there was no conflict. A majority accepted respectability in principle and sought it or cheated on it as circumstances dictated. Sustained, deliberate counter-respectability rarely presented itself in the barnyard, the mill, the shop, the school, or the social call.

Respectability displayed strength, too, in its adaptability under strain. From roughly World War I forward, a resourceful speakeasy mentality functioned. The cocktail party, the smart set, and café society accommodated "nice" people. Blues became "entertainment." The mass media upgraded notoriety to celebrity. Psychoanalysis showed respectability in an ambiguous light. Revolutions, anti-colonial movements, worldwide economic depression, totalitarianism, and eventually another cataclysmic war exposed everyone to upheaval and mortal danger. Nevertheless, through the 1940s and 1950s a socially intelligible balance held. On the one hand, Mom and Apple Pie, God and Property, Our Glorious Leader, and Correct Thinking—or whatever the shibboleth was from country to country—received their due. Cultural instruc-

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tions remained clear: get a haircut, be on time, carry proper identification. On the other hand, room was left to relax—to become temporarily a watered-down Rimbaud, make-believe hoodlum, or attenuated carnival dancer—without losing the thread. It was believed—indeed hoped—that movie stars had orgies galore, preferably on bearskin rugs. The few should live licentiously for the many. But discretion was required. The stars must support the Code of Decency or the Party guidelines by day and pull the shades at night.

In short, respectability, my example of a strong cultural norm, had staying power, manipulative power, coherence, and resilience. Respectability is not entirely finished yet. A "respectable" way to behave endures, fuzzy and precarious, more or less enforceable at law, and more or less adhered to by the executive class and the old blue-collar class, deeply ingrained in many families. Perhaps no explosion now occurs when someone attends the symphony in jungle fatigue pants or wears a "gay" earring. Still, numerous "mature" men would be mortified to appear sockless in public, and numerous women would feel disgraced by a belch.

In addition to slides, I wish I had recordings from deep inside the souls of readers born *before* 1950: their consternation over the decline of respectability would sound as eerie as whale calls. This consternation comes from different feelings according to temperament and social beliefs.

A great many old believers are dismayed because respectability was painfully drilled into them, they mastered the whole complicated code and strained to live up to it, and suddenly a crowd of entertainers, young nobodies, and pointy-headed intellectuals seized the cultural initiative. Movie actresses—who, powdered and rouged, ought to have *blessed* the status quo by stepping out of limousines in sheath dresses and ermine coats under blue and rose spotlights—instead appeared with matted, kinky hair, breasts dangling under stained T-shirts. Students with draft deferments and job prospects were burning the flag. Young ministers offered public prayers for Patty Hearst and her "associates," not out of Christian charity or universal concern, but in the spirit of cheerleaders. Now that the shock has worn off and the harm has been done, as the old believers see it, respectability seems to have been sold out for nothing worth having—drugs, shoplifting, herpes simplex, and a rising rate of youthful suicides.

Others are dismayed for the opposite reason by the same results. They grew up under respectability, were critical of it, and hoped the attack on it would lead to a freer, happier, safer society. Instead, as they see it, the movement was trivialized and deflected. Law students in running shoes are prepared to carry on business as usual or worse.

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Polarization, as we all know, was the byword in the period from the Free Speech Movement to Watergate. Relatively disorganized, unrecognized groups learned to use cultural nonconformity to wage politics. Counter-cultural presence was shaped to state demands: stop the war, jobs for blacks, power to sisterhood. Rather quickly cultural politics became an issue in itself. For a brief interval one could call the Beatles lower-class deformed with only music in mind. Soon those became fighting words. Respectables were held responsible for induced poverty, racism, stifling routines and alienating work, for police brutality, a vile war in Vietnam, and for piling nuclear weapons on each other fifty times over, for shoddy goods, phony sentiments, and crooked deals, for miseducation and destruction of the environment—in short, for the worst of human nature and an intrinsically defective way of life.

In order to cope and stall and guard more important levers of power, the established order negotiated, conceded, and abandoned when it came to details of respectability. New merchandise was rushed out: water beds, rolling papers, tape decks, mountaineer packs, warm-up suits, socially significant overalls. Rules were dropped. In fact, a way was found to loosen up at a safe distance from hippies, radicals, or poor people. Off with the white shirts, you swinging dentists of Cherry Hill. On with the turtlenecks and the double knits and the psychedelic ties a mile wide (in what clothing manufacturers around 1970 called the Peacock Revolution). Hoist skirts and tighten denims across the butt. Put on the layered chains of a good-doing pimp and his teenage whore. Pass for a hip comedian, a centerfold, a person who sings at Mafia hotels.

In this period the counter-culture did more than change the dress code. Important issues carried. In a large sense, some good was done. Over the subsequent decade, however, the cultural movement was fatally compromised, fatigued, and trivialized. Today prosperity through unemployment is not working any better than the multiversity, but few seem to examine the way of life that produces the idea. Almost any combination can be chosen from the cultural boutique: trading in the commodities market Monday through Friday and gathering wild foods on the weekend; gay liberation and campaigning for a return to the Mass in Latin; computer programming and astrology; save the whales and sushi. With all the runners and all the stretching and unlimbering at curbside, some neighborhoods have been turned into giant track-and-field events. Counter-respectability has become non-respectability, a sort of background or neutral option, part of the social landscape through which individuals thread their way according to circumstance and impulse. The 4-H club need never confront the meditation society, and neither need confront the single-parents group. Roles coexist and succeed each other without adding up.

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Sad. The brave word "life-style" was coined. It hinted at rich possibilities, a broad view of human development and the life course, an order that pleased rather than constricted. What it became is the name for the section of the newspaper that runs recipes for quiche and pictures of the fascinating couple who turned an old mortuary into a bedspread center.

Conservatives are likely to say, "What did you expect? The baby boom crowded too many spoiled adolescents onto campus, and the liberals and the media incited them to go hog-wild for so long that they will never grow up." At the time, conservatives were frightened, insulted, and elbowed by the counter-culture. Maybe they are secretly relieved that things turned out so badly. Radicals may find solace as well. The ability of the established order to absorb, trivialize, and pass along the cost excused their defeat once again, proved what they are up against and why only a direct transfer of power will do.

It is all very well to take the "calm" view. Every stretch of history contains silly attitudes, bungled chances, cross-purposes, and flimsy structures. What will disturbances in our time matter to someone in the future? In art and science, relatively controllable compared with culture as a whole, it is normal for three hundred or so lackluster years to pass between periods of true excellence. People can make do with a dilapidated respectability norm and a muddled life-style norm indefinitely. There are far worse things to worry about.

Needed or not, however, a major shift in Western culture may be coming. Trivial productions do not necessarily have trivial effects. Pressure seems to be building up for change more drastic than skirmishes over neckties and brassieres or even the deepening inability of governments to relate revenue to expenditure.

Heretofore, for good or bad, Western culture has fostered linear thinking above all. Linear thinking is embedded in concepts such as prime mover, cause and effect, means and ends, input and output, critical mass, formative stages. It is embedded in proverbs and literature and commerce. As the twig is bent, so grows the tree. You can't teach an old dog new tricks. The child is father to the man. Must have successful track record. It gained a near monopoly through the view of character formation epitomized by psychoanalysis. Against this, the idea is now in the air that a "life" consists of styles that can be chosen, altered, discontinued, and replaced like fabrics.

The notion is also in the air that morality ought to be a purely private matter and that out of countless uncoordinated personal preferences will somehow flow public good—pushed along perhaps by an invisible hand such as Adam Smith imagined. In a freakish way this continues a Western tradition of individualism: choice, conscience, assent, will as a

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faculty of self, values created rather than granted. But it is hard to think of a moralist up to now who makes no provision, not even a statistical one, for relating the individual to a cosmos and a community. How is it possible for humans not to live in groups and form social values? When lives are styled in the same space, what keeps them from tangling?

These new notions, while not long supportable in themselves, are so far removed from Western habits of thought that they suggest the chain is ready to snap. Our successors may become unable to think as "Westerners" except through an effort of scholarship. They will, however, continue as social beings. To say that at present we can't give a reason for human association implies that enormous pressure for a new connection will build up.

A second potential source of pressure is the presence of a generation with nothing to go back to and fewer inhibitions about going forward. At the bottom of their hearts, those old enough to view the life-style era as a "phase" hope to preserve enclaves of culture similar to what they were comfortable with in the first place—respectability or principled opposition to respectability. But wait. There is someone to whom the life-style era is not a phase. Farrell's horseplaying housewife had a grandson, now grown up and living in Houston, where he works as a layout and paste-up artist. To him this "phase" is the sea in which he swims, as it is for his sister, who stayed in Chicago and was one of the first women hired to be a sales representative in the wholesale wine business. He considers himself to be a regular member of society, in that sense respectable. Yet his world tips in a different direction from that of his grandmother. He comes home in his prefaded jeans, throws his backpack on the floor, says the day was a pisser, throws his mail on the floor. After a meal (which might or might not be known as "dinner" and which could equally well include a fast-food gristleburger or fresh-made pesto), he listens to an album by the Booger Eaters, skims an article on tax shelters, and during the late news on TV comes to a consensus with one or more people who live with him for the time being that the telephone company sucks, the weather sucks, and Lebanon sucks.

History separates this man from his grandmother as evolution positions two species to receive light from different regions of the spectrum. *Don't talk lewd.* She clutched at that even while she was taking on the neighborhood. Respectability was the code her culture trained her to rely on in a crisis, as it was the code whose infringement made her feel the situation in which she found herself indeed was a crisis. Her grandson has no special talent for breaking taboos or expanding consciousness. He will not directly test the established order's capacity to deflect and absorb. He will probably wear shined shoes if he has to go to court. Yet he may be, at bottom, unreachable by the respectables or their

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traditional opponents. How much reality can he ascribe to a norm that for him has no interior?

Perhaps the greatest pressure for a cultural framework more settled than "life-styles" arises from the strain of assembling the world from moment to moment, like walking a long distance by reinventing the step every two and a half feet. We endure and participate in a welter called existence. The categories into which we divide the welter—such as forces, conditions, stimuli, blows, feelings, perplexities, and relationships—are not exhaustive and do not necessarily constitute fact or wisdom in an absolute sense. They simply organize our experience, and thus they are worthless if used only once or only by some people who chance to be in the mood.

The advantage of organizing experience on the biological level is clear. Every organism has a genetic program, capabilities fitted to an environment, patterned relations with others of its species, and a boundary to regulate inflow and outflow. Perception automatically sorts experience: focusing attention, triggering response, and enabling skills to develop.

That culture continues in this direction is obvious—economizing effort, standardizing encounters, pooling experience. Thus life under the dispensation of life-styles becomes very jittery. It is exhausting to approach existence as a temporary self with no reliable connections. It is intolerable to have to make up rules each time for each social transaction. If nothing else, a culture ought to give us points of reference in a whirling world.

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Someone Else

ALAN SHAPIRO

When she had come to live with them, by then
vanity was all her stroke had left her.
Yet it became another kind of health,
a way to get through days when she would wake
in her wet bed, a child again, afraid
she might be found before the sheets were clean;
or showering, when she would have to see her body
like someone else resisting her, so stiff
it only let her turn enough to reach,
not wash, the bitter smell that clung like shame.

So she would spend the mornings struggling
with her silk slip and dress, and work her stockings
up her legs till they seemed agile with shimmering.
The rouged cheek, the hair done up, the nails
polished till the brightness made her hands
(if only they'd keep still) less like a stranger's—
these enabled her to leave her room
and face them, and believe the care she needed
was what they owed her,
what she permitted them to give. They were,

she would tell herself, tottering her great
weight down the stairs, no better than her husbands,
those first betrayers: the sullen courtesy
her grandchild showed, the irritation hiding

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in her daughter's pity, she could at least ignore them
(at least there would be power there), and wait
till they went out, wanting them out,
so she could feel finally at home,
the tv on,
just her and her celebrities.

She could anticipate each set response,
each misery. Nothing could surprise her.
And with a kind of joy she could be certain
that even if some star walked from the screen
the mirror, always at hand, would show her hair
in place, her face powdered; she could feel
the aftertaste of mouthwash, could even savor
the bitter cleanness in her mouth, and know,
nearly invincible, that she was ready,
should anybody come to take her out.

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Language and Victorian Ideology

HANS AARSLEFF

Every age has a view of language that matches its dominant ideology. For the Victorians this view sustained spiritual values. Language was almost as good as prophecy. Etymology revealed a providential order; words and their history recorded mankind's moral mission. Philology became another word for philosophy. Words flash forth truth, beauty, and wisdom sooner than philosophical argument. Language is fossil poetry, said Emerson, because "the etymologist finds the deadest word to have been once a brilliant picture." The utilitarians were the false prophets of the age, "unable to understand organic unity and growth" and ready "to throw back language also into a chaotic state." Looking upon "a hyphen as the only bond of union," they were known by their language, the "new gibberish." The study of words and their true historical meanings became the chief instrument of spiritual and moral insight. Words are not mere man-made arbitrary and conventional artifacts. The history of languages argues the single origin of mankind; the origin of language lay in God-given roots for abstract concepts. Rightly understood and executed, the study of language is a science that more firmly than any other science proves the Creator's continuing presence in Creation. It ensures the convergence of truths revealed with truths discovered.

The components of this view came together during the early decades of the nineteenth century. They were enlisted to silence eighteenth-century thought in which the new century saw nothing but materialism and moral shallowness. These views of language assumed a prominent role in the conservative reaction against the French Revolution and the ever-present fear of new revolution. In certain ways they resemble views that were widely held in the seventeenth century. Two hundred years apart the debate over the nature of language raised similar themes. To understand the Victorian ideology of language it will be useful to look briefly at the previous centuries.

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I

The seventeenth-century Anglican divine Robert South was a great Victorian favorite. In 1662 he preached a sermon on the text: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." Adam, said South, "came into the world a philosopher, which sufficiently appeared in his writing the nature of things upon their names; he could view essences in themselves, and read forms without their respective properties. . . . An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of Paradise." This passage expresses a fundamental seventeenth-century belief. Adam's name-giving was the key that opened our understanding of the nature of language. The Babylonian confusion did not pose a threat to this view; on the contrary, it explained the multiplicity of languages as the consequence of moral degradation. It also gave hope that elements of the original moral perfection had survived and might be recaptured by suitable study. Moral and spiritual regeneration would find support in linguistic scholarship. If Adam had called a camel a camel, then this particular combination of sounds expressed and contained the camelness of camel, the essence of camel. In his state of perfection there could have been no other choice of sounds to do the

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job, for the choice could not have been arbitrary. Or to put it in more familiar current terms, for Adam, and in his language, the signifier (the word) and the signified (the idea or concept) are not separable; they are identical, forming a total unity without distinct aspects.

Language is the full measure of knowledge; it is a true nomenclature to the inventory of the world—a nomenclature in which nothing is arbitrary and from which nothing has been left out. Adam correctly knew and named all essences, genera, and species. The Swedish botanist Linnaeus called Adam the first Linnaean and himself a second Adam. Nature was his Paradise. Language and etymology contain true knowledge; they are epistemology. A few decades after South's sermon, a French scholar wrote that "the first man was at the same time the first etymologist; this science was, so to speak, his first occupation." The doctrine of the Adamic language was not a lunatic idea of the sort that can be quietly forgotten. It was accepted by good minds and influential figures. If it was a kind of error, it was the kind of clearly articulated error that Bacon rightly credited with making useful contributions to knowledge.

But it was soon realized that this Adamicism was a dangerous error, for it encouraged the belief, accepted by many, that knowledge of creation and nature could be more safely gained by linguistic study and inspired etymological insight than by painstaking observation. Since the new scientists were determined to make their knowledge of nature yield independent proof of the creator's wise design, that knowledge had to rely on discovery without reference to revelation. Thus the nature of language and the problem it raised assumed a central position in the methods and epistemology of the new science. This problem was most fully worked out in Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding.*

The rejection of Adamicism rested on an old doctrine that now took on fresh urgency: language is not divine but human, being continuously created by man to serve his needs in the midst of the changing affairs of the world. Languages, said Locke, "received their birth and signification from ignorant and illiterate people, who sorted and denominated things by those sensible qualities they found in them." This doctrine demolished the central principles of Adamicism. It did away with the priviledged epistemological position of language. Among its important consequences, the first was what we call the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign; there is no "natural connection between particular articulate sounds and certain ideas, for then there would be but one language amongst all men." Etymological insight will never reveal the camelness of camel. Second, since languages were not made by philosophers, logicians, or scholars, they do not point to essences, species, and genera—this "manner of the sorting of things is the workmanship of men." Language is not a nomenclature; neither is it a natural history or a body of correct natural knowledge. Third, one language is radically untranslatable into another, for each will reflect the very different needs of its speakers. This doctrine—for Locke a doctrine both founded on theory and borne out by observation—contains the principle of linguistic relativism; that is, the idea that languages express the distinct cultures of their speakers so that they may in turn yield anthropological information both past and present, in time and space. It also contains the bothersome implication, not pressed by Locke, that languages have separate origins. Obviously, Adamicism allowed neither relativism nor polygenesis.

These principles are summed up in a disarmingly simple observation about people's attitude toward language. Speakers, Locke observed, readily assume that their ideas correspond correctly to the things they know and that their words refer reliably to these ideas, "for without this 'double conformity' of their ideas, they find they should both think amiss of things in themselves, and talk of them unintelligibly to others." If the word names the idea and the idea corresponds to the thing, then the word is as good as the thing. We all have Adamic expectations, but we are mistaken. The conformity doesn't hold because our words are no better than our ideas, and these are radically private and incommunicable except through the imperfect medium of speech—imperfect because, being indirect, there can be no assurance that a word I speak elicits precisely the same idea in the hearer as the one I had in mind when I spoke. This view, obviously, throws all the burden of correct knowledge onto shared experience and observation. It even puts limits on the

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adequacy of verbal communication of whatever sort, and it would seem that this was what Wordsworth had in mind when he spoke of "the sad incompetence of human speech"—so the remedy for him also became the communal experience of simple situations, including the speech of simple folk.

The nineteenth century wished to overcome all this unhappy alienation of man from nature, God, and fellow man. Several factors came together to reinstitute a modified Adamicism. In science, natural history revived respect for essences, and seeing language as a product of history gave it a providential cast that took away the pernicious implications of arbitrariness. Words are often wiser than we are; we must study them if we wish to understand and confirm our spiritual nature. This last concern was the special interest of the type John Holloway has aptly called the Victorian Sage.

II

"In philosophy contempt for Locke is the beginning of wisdom," said Joseph de Maistre, who was widely read and quoted in England. His statement strikes the ground note of the reaction against the eighteenth century. Baron Bunsen, Queen Victoria's choice for Prussian ambassador to the Court of St. James, said that "language and religion are the two poles of our consciousness, mutually presupposing each other." Among the new modes of study, there can be no doubt that the newly created comparative-historical philology was held to offer the most dramatic refutation of eighteenth-century delusion and error, as, for instance, when it offered fresh evidence for the single and elevated origin of mankind. It quickly usurped the entire territory of language study. It also became the model humanistic discipline. Factual, descriptive, classificatory, and comparative, the new philology appeared to satisfy every article of scientific faith in objectivity and disengagement from ideology. It was also accompanied by the excitement that new knowledge arouses, with the treasured benefit that, by opening the sacred books of the East, it gave Indo-European mankind new sources of spirituality for troubled times. All this is beyond doubt. But something else also happened that was equally important, though less obvious. An alliance was effected between language and science to sustain the argument for final causes and the divine presence in nature. Without this alliance it would not have been possible to revive the doctrine of species and essences that Locke and his century had dismissed.

This alliance was made possible by Georges Cuvier. In December 1795 he gave the famous lecture that introduced the principles of his comparative anatomy. In 1800 his first volumes under that title appeared, and over the next decades he lectured on the subject at the Museum of Natural History in Paris to large and enthusiastic audiences. Comparative anatomy became the model science, and some of its principles were quickly adopted in language study and anthropology. Its popularity is widely attested in common locutions and metaphors—for instance, as we have seen, in Emerson's phrase "fossil poetry," soon quoted in England with the addition of "fossil ethics" and "fossil history." Cuvier himself regularly referred to language study for support of his own findings. In his salon, naturalists mixed with linguists, scholars, and philosophers.

Cuvier's anatomy is best known for the principle of the correlation of parts or structure, which made it possible to reconstruct extinct species from sparse materials, a bone or a tooth, for example. In Balzac's *La Peau de chagrin* (The Wild Ass's Skin), the narrator muses ecstatically on this marvel as the main character, Raphaël de Valentin, for a moment alone in the cabinet of antiquities, waits for the appearance of the old antiquary. "Have you ever thrown yourself into the immensity of space and time by reading the geological works of Cuvier? . . . Fired by his retrospective gaze, we paltry human beings, born yesterday, can bridge the chaos, chant an endless hymn, and recreate the past of the universe in a sort of retrograde apocalypse." This "awe-inspiring resurrection" was the voice of a single man. If not a creator, Cuvier was a re-creator and one who inspired imagination.

But it was not the correlation of parts itself that cemented the alliance of science and language. Cuvier firmly rejected the idea of transformation, which had been argued before and which remained ever-present around him. When three-thousand-year-old mum-

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mies of cats, dogs, snakes, and birds were brought back from Egypt, Cuvier exulted: there, you see, no sign of change even over so many years—an argument that did not convince some of his distinguished contemporaries. He rejected the sliding scale of the chain of being and insisted on the fixity of species. He held that there are discontinuities or jumps in the animal kingdom. He was what is nowadays called a saltationist. "Natural history," said Cuvier, "has a principle that is uniquely its own; it is that of the *conditions of existence*, popularly called *final causes*. As nothing can exist unless it unites the conditions that make its existence possible, the different parts of each being must be so coordinated as to make the entire being possible, not merely in itself, but in its relations with those that surround it."

Species have remained fixed since the moment of creation. Indeed, to think otherwise would make natural history impossible. In a publication that appeared within a month of the 1795 lecture, Cuvier rejected the notion that climate could have played any role, "for that would mean to say that all quadrupeds derive only from a single species, that the differences they now present are mere successive degenerations: in a word, it would reduce all natural history to nothing because its object would then be nothing but variable forms and fleeting types." It would make knowledge impossible. Observation, description, and classification are enough. Speculation was irrelevant; natural history pronounces what he called "sublime oracles." Speculation is dangerous, even impious. Cuvier's science reintroduced essentialism along with final causes—the very idea that previous centuries had dismissed as incompatible with aim and method in the study of nature.

William Whewell was a great admirer of Cuvier, quoting him at length and with approval. He found that Cuvier proceeded in his investigations "like the decipherer of a manuscript, who makes out his alphabet from one part of the context, and then applies it to the rest." Being committed to the importance of nomenclature, he became the great nomenclator of the age, giving us not only the familiar "scientist," but also supplying Charles Lyell with the terms "eocene," "miocene," and "pliocene," and giving Faraday "anode," "cathode," and "ion." He also coined the term "uniformitarianism." Shortly after his appointment to the chair of moral philosophy at Cambridge University, Whewell wrote to one of his sage friends that he had already used his influence "to introduce an Anti-Lockian philosophy, and [I] intend to use it for other good purposes."

Among the "Aphorisms Concerning Ideas" placed at the beginning of Whewell's *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences* (1840), we find these:

> We take for granted that each kind of things has a special *character* which may be expressed by a Definition. The ground of our assumption is this: that reasoning must be possible.
>
> If (Scientific) Natural History were introduced into education, men might become familiar with the fixation of the signification of words by Types; and this agrees with the common processes by which words acquire their significations.
>
> The assumption of a Final Cause in the structure of each part of animals and plants is as inevitable as the assumption of an Efficient Cause for every event. The maxim that in organized bodies nothing is *in vain*, is as necessarily true as the maxim that nothing happens *by chance*.
>
> The Palaetiological Sciences [that is, speculations which refer to actual past events and attempt to explain them by laws of causation] point backwards with lines which are broken, but which all converge to the *same* invisible point: and this point is the Origin of the Moral and Spiritual, as well as of the natural world.

These aphorisms speak for themselves. They show, for instance, that Whewell would not have shared Locke's dismissal of the double conformity, and that he, like Cuvier, took the fixity of types to be a precondition for knowledge. He came close to reviving the Adamic doctrine.

The role Whewell gave language shows clearly in his response to Robert Chambers's scandalous *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*. In support of the development hypothesis or evolution it presented, this book advanced the shocking doctrines that the original state of mankind was barbarous rather than civilized, that animals possessed a kind of gesture and sign language of which human speech was merely a refinement, and that

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language consequently did not have a miraculous origin but rather a material source in man's constitution, for "such an arrangement of mutually adapted things was as likely to produce sounds as an Eolian harp placed in a draught is to produce tones." A reviewer said, with a sense of outrage, that Chambers had "annulled all distinction between physical and moral." In a book hastily put together, Whewell argued that the history of languages, being a science beyond the domain of matter, will lead us "to regard the present order of the world as pointing towards an origin altogether of a different kind from anything which our material science can grasp," since "we cannot place the origin of language in any point of view in which it comes under the jurisdiction of material causation at all." The problem of language was so important to Whewell that Trinity College, Cambridge, during his mastership, became the home of the linguistic turn against Locke and his progeny. It was the home base of the Victorian linguistic sage.

Max Müller became the untiring prophet of this linguistic finalism, chiefly in his phenomenally popular *Science of Language*, first delivered as lectures at the Royal Institution in London in the early 1860s. The very title rang out Müller's fundamental assertion. Nature, he said in the preface, may be defined so as to exclude the science of language, but "with the wider meaning assigned to nature in our days, I hold as strongly as ever that the study of human speech may claim not only admission to, but the highest place among the Physical Sciences." If we think this is a case of question begging, it is because we may not share the assumption of final causes, which Müller held in common with Cuvier and Whewell, both of whom Müller often cited. Language occupies the highest place precisely because it comes closest to proving the Great Argument. Drawing a firm boundary between man and brute, language "would seem to possess at the present moment peculiar claims on the attention of all who, while watching with sincere admiration the progress of comparative physiology, yet consider it their duty to enter their manly protest against a revival of the shallow theories of Lord Monboddo"—Müller's sarcastic euphemism for Darwin.

Müller admitted a difficulty, which, once overcome, enforced the transcendent importance of the science of language. In words quoted by Müller, Whewell had said that "natural history, when systematically treated, excludes all that is historical, for it classes objects by their permanent and universal properties, and has nothing to do with the narration of particular facts." Here Whewell agreed with Cuvier; we can know nothing about origins except our faith in the origin that lies beyond the realm of natural history. Language and philology, however, take us safely into the historical dimension. Though there is continuous change in language, according to Müller, "it is not in the power of any man either to produce or change it." In other words, everything in language is natural, there is no *historical* change, and by the same token "language is independent of political history"—a key point in the ideology.

It was, Müller believed, the great achievement of the science of language that it had collected, arranged, and classified the facts of language, thus illuminating not merely its nature and laws but also its origin by bringing us back to its ultimate constituents: roots or "phonetic cells"—Müller's rhetoric reveals his argument and, indeed, makes it possible. Roots, he said, "stand like barriers between the chaos and kosmos of human speech." They are the names of full-fledged concepts, thus presupposing the prior formation of ideas. At this radical stage we understand that language could not have come about gradually by human means. Like Cuvier, Müller never carried his science all the way to the first cause; he merely took us far enough to see only one answer—as with Whewell's lines converging "to the *same* invisible point." Language is, after all, natural, like the Adamic language; and the "three branches of physical study, now generally spoken of as Palaeontology, Embryology, and Comparative Anatomy, have produced the same effect with regard to the problem of creation which our own linguistic studies have produced with regard to the problem of the origin of language and thought." These views and arguments were part of the sage's armory.

III

John Holloway has identified the type he called the Victorian Sage in a book under that title. He did not relate the sage to linguistic

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philosophy, but he made some enlightening observations that assume a deeper meaning in our context. The sage had a distinct style; what gave his views "life and meaning lay in the actual words of the original, in the sage's own use of language, not in what can survive summarizings of their 'content.' " For Holloway the typical sage is Carlyle, who "does not wish to be thought of as explicitly allotting his own senses to words, but as discovering what really they mean already, what their existing present use both depends upon, and perhaps conceals." In other words, Carlyle replaced ratiocinative discourse with the evocation of the true meanings of words, pointing to the meanings they hold that are deeper than their commonly realized significations, on the premise, of course, that this deeper meaning is somehow naturally and morally available to all earnest and thoughtful readers. It is a style that is altogether different from, say, John Stuart Mill's—not to mention Jeremy Bentham's. This contrast defines their opposed philosophies: one of them committed to a moral view of language, the other to a social and functional view; one intimating divine and natural content, the other accepting only conventional and human origin.

The Victorian sage is also a European sage. His arsenal is philology, his instrument etymology. He is the prophet of words. Most prominent among the sages who wrote on words and language, among the linguistic sages, was Richard Chenevix Trench who wrote several vastly popular and delightful books that expounded the lessons to be found in the history of words pertaining to religion, history, morality, ethics. He viewed language as a "faithful record of the good and of the evil which in time past have been working in the minds and hearts of men," much like a "moral barometer, which indicates and permanently marks the rise or fall of a nation's life"—the metaphor is Joseph de Maistre's and was popular in England. In one place he draws a typical lesson from the etymology of "education." Unlike "instruction," it is not a process of filling the mind with knowledge. On the contrary, it is the "opening up of its own fountains," for "education must educe, being from 'educare,' which is but another form of 'educere'; and that is 'to draw out,' not 'to put in.' " This is, in fact, a Neo-Platonic topos, often cited at the time. The point is, of course, the doctrine that to learn is to remember. This is only one among many details that show how congenial the Adamic doctrine was to the sage.

The sage is brilliantly portrayed in Balzac's magnificent panorama of life. In the preface to *Le Livre mystique*, which includes *Louis Lambert*, Balzac wrote that "the author has not thought it would be honorable for French literature to remain silent about a poetry so grand as that of the mystics." Louis Lambert is the archetype of the young man who seeks all the knowledge to which the sage aspires, and his primary inspiration is words. He had often, he said, performed

> delightful voyages, embarked on a word into the abysses of the past, like an insect floating with the stream on a piece of grass. . . . What a beautiful book could be composed, telling the life and adventures of a word. . . . Is it not true that most words are dyed with the idea represented by their outward form? Imagine the genius that has made them! If it takes great intellect to create a word, how old is human speech? . . . The ancient picturing of human ideas represented by zoological forms, would it not have determined the first signs used in the Orient for the writing of languages? Would it not in the course of transmission have left some vestiges in our modern languages, which all share the debris of the primitive word of nations? . . . Is it to that ancient Spirit that we owe the mysteries hidden in human speech? Words are stamped with a living power which they derive from the soul and pay back to it by the mysteries of action and reaction that exist between speech and thought.

This passage reveals both the repertory and the manner of the sage. Louis Lambert was making the same discovery that all children normally make, according to Trench. Writing some fifteen years after Balzac, Trench observed: "There is a sense of reality about children which makes them rejoice to discover that there is also a reality about words, that they are not merely arbitrary signs, but living powers." The dismissal of mere arbitrariness was a key point in the ideology, and it was repeated often. "Language is the product of inward necessity," wrote Baron Bunsen, "not of an arbitrary or conventional arrangement." For Lambert and Trench words are living powers (a term also used by Coleridge) that reveal a reality which is naturally in them, open to all who have not been perverted by listening to false prophets.

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Louis Lambert is a young man whose mind becomes unhinged in the pursuit of deep knowledge. He perishes by the spirit. The complement to Louis Lambert is Raphaël in *La Peau de chagrin*. Both face the perplexities that cast minds into turmoil during the early decades of the nineteenth century, and both are destroyed by the lives they choose. Both seek fulfillment in intense study and write a lost treatise on the will; both mine the knowledge of their time and find relief, only when it is too late, in the love for a girl called Pauline; and both—like Faust—achieve a sort of apotheosis in death, thanks to the dedication of their Paulines.

La Peau de chagrin is about the inefficacy of science for the conduct of life. When Raphaël seeks help from the scientists to stop the contractions of the skin and escape from the consequences, they have nothing to offer but words. One scientist, "the great pontiff of zoology," tells him the skin is from the wild ass of Persia, "extremely rare, the onager of the ancients, *equus asinus*, the *koulan* of the Tartars, which Pallas has travelled to observe and given to science." But the museum has no specimen of it, and all Raphaël gets out of the interview is that human science is "a nomenclature." The next scientist reduces all to motion, illustrated by a billiard ball—"movement, locomotion, change of place? What immense vanity is hidden in words! A name, is it then a solution? Still, there is all of science." The third scientist, a chemist, exclaims, "By God, young man, that is true," in response to Raphaël's despairing words: "Since we cannot invent things, it seems that we are reduced to inventing names." Balzac had an uncanny grasp of the classificatory verbalism that reigned in the science of his time.

But this is not all. In *La Peau de chagrin* Balzac also flays the sage. The grotesque and unnaturally old second-hand dealer from whom Raphaël gets the skin is a false sage—indeed, as we are reminded more than once, another Mephistopheles. Having, of course, made a deep study of languages, Raphaël easily translates the Arabic inscription and is immediately flattered by the old man, "Ah, you read Sanskrit, perhaps you have travelled in Persia or Bengal?" To which the young man correctly replies no; he is neither reading Sanskrit nor has he traveled in those distant places, as the old man soon claims he has himself, while in the same breath asserting that he knows all languages—a false assertion, we know, since he mistook an Arabic inscription for Sanskrit. The old man then engages in a bit of philosophizing and etymologizing to reveal the great mystery of human life. Willing and doing ("vouloir et pouvoir") are the ways of death; but "between these two terms of human action, there is another formula which the sages [*les sages*] seize hold of, the source of my happiness and longevity. . . . Knowing [*savoir*] leaves our feeble organization in a perpetual state of calm. . . . No excess has worn down either my soul or my body." In the midst of suicidal despair, Raphaël finds assurance in the old man, who closes with an etymology, "Doesn't the word 'sagesse' come from 'savoir'?" But later in the Italian Theater, Raphaël sees the old sage dressed up as an elegant young man escorting the "detestable Euphrasie," and he has a vision of Goethe's Mephistopheles and savors "all the pleasures of vengeance in the contemplation of the profound humiliation of this sublime wisdom [*cette sagesse sublime*], whose fall a short while ago seemed impossible."

The meaning of the novel is, in fact, suggested by the title. The great pontiff of zoology tells Raphaël that the skin comes from the nearly mythical onager, "but there are differences of opinion about the origin of the name. Some say it comes from the Turkish word *Chagri*, others that *Chagri* is the town where this zoological hide was subjected to the chemical preparation so well described by Pallas and giving it the particular grain we admire; Mr. Martellens has written me that Châagri is a small stream." *La Peau de chagrin* is a brilliant exploration of the pun contained in its title and, at the same time, a harsh commentary on the perils of etymology and verbomania. The naturalist sees only one meaning, and Raphaël sees the other only when it is too late, having been overcome by the sage's etymologizing on "savoir" and "sagesse."

By an astonishing piece of irony, the *Oxford English Dictionary*, on the authority of Littré's French dictionary, derived the meaning "sorrow, affliction" from the word "chagrin," which comes from the Turkish " 'çaghri,' rump of a horse, hence the prepared skin of this part. The sense-development took place in French, where the word meaning rough

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and granular skin employed to rub, polish, file, became by metaphor the expression of gnawing trouble. In English the word in the original material sense is now written shagreen." This was precisely the kind of etymology at which the Victorian sage excelled. But it was no help at all to Raphaël de Valentin.

The alliance of science and language combined with the new philology to build the sage's arsenal. This combination found typical statement in the words of one of England's linguistic sages, Julius Charles Hare, who was a close friend of Richard Chenevix Trench: "A language will often be wiser, not merely than the vulgar, but even than the wisest of those who speak it. Being like amber in its efficacy to circulate the electric spirit of truth, it is also like amber in embalming and preserving the relics of ancient wisdom, although one is not seldom puzzled to decipher its contents"—words that could have been spoken by Louis Lambert if he had been given to cooler language. The new philology had a populist dimension. It brought to light the wisdom of language and gave it back to the folk who never knew the truths they spoke. Scholars had again become spiritual ministers. The eighteenth century had made the philosophy of language into the central argument both for its conception of the nature of man and for the promise of unaided human progress toward nearly perfect states of knowledge and society. Man could shape his own happiness. With the arms of their arsenal, the Victorian and European sages fought their crusade for spiritual values against freethinking, the immoral levity of revolutionary thought, the arbitrariness of words—and against evolution. This last became their Achilles' heel. Max Müller was fighting a rearguard action that soon engaged him in controversy with the scientist Darwin and the linguist William Dwight Whitney. He did not prevail, and by the time he died, in the year 1900, the eighteenth century had returned to favor.

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On First Looking into Chapman's Holden

Speculations on a Murder

DANIEL M. STASHOWER

Mark David Chapman, the young assassin, was carrying two things with him when he shot and killed John Lennon on the steps of the Dakota apartments in Manhattan: a pistol and a paperback copy of *The Catcher in the Rye*. The function of the pistol was obvious. Less obvious was the function of J. D. Salinger's novel. Yet the book, it seems fair to say, must have had some special significance to Mark Chapman. Any attempt to uncover its significance is, in the nature of the case, highly speculative. Yet some aspects of *The Catcher in the Rye*, set beside Mark Chapman's murder of John Lennon, seem so suggestive that not to speculate upon the connections between the two seems a temptation impossible to forgo.

J. D. Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* was published in 1951. Like the Beatles, whose rise to fame came about roughly thirteen years later, the novel's adolescent hero, Holden Caulfield, became a spokesman for a generation of rebellious, supposedly much-misunderstood youth. An oversimplified yet functional reading of the Salinger novel might conclude that all that the book advocates would fall under the heading of "innocence" and all that it contemns falls under that of "phoniness." Holden Caulfield, during his somewhat aimless ramble through New York, feels overwhelmed by the phoniness he finds all around him. He struggles to preserve his own tenuous hold on youthful innocence—or, as he sometimes puts it, "niceness"—and despairs when he finds that innocence lost or threatened in the young people around him.

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At his trial, Mark Chapman read what is perhaps *The Catcher in the Rye*'s most famous passage:

> I keep picturing all these little kids playing some game in this big field of rye and all. Thousands of little kids, and nobody's around—nobody big, I mean—except me. And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff—I mean if they're running and they don't look where they're going I have to come out from somewhere and *catch* them. That's all I'd do all day. I'd just be the catcher in the rye and all. I know it's crazy, but that's the only thing I'd really like to be. I know it's crazy.

While scarcely as succinct as John Wilkes Booth's "Sic semper tyrannus," or as compelling as Brutus's "Romans, countrymen, and lovers," the above passage was Chapman's sole attempt to justify the murder of John Lennon. It ought to be examined for anything in it that might have led Chapman from Salinger's rye fields to the Dakota apartments.

Probably no one will object too strenuously to the notion that Mark Chapman identified himself rather heavily with Holden Caulfield. Chapman would, after all, be only one of millions who felt that Salinger's book was written especially for him, that it addressed itself to his problems and, in the way that certain books do, eased his pain. If Chapman identified with Holden, what sort of view of the world would accompany the identification? *The Catcher in the Rye* is a book almost wholly concerned with the preservation of innocence. When Holden speaks of "coming out from somewhere" to catch the children, he hopes to save them from becoming the adult "phonies" of the kind he has been encountering in New York. He doesn't want

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the children to grow up into people who will "talk about how many miles their goddam cars get to the gallon." If Chapman also saw himself as a protector of innocence, why was he inspired to shoot Lennon? Here is a question of the kind Holden himself might have called "a real bastard."

Two possibilities come to mind: either Mark Chapman saw John Lennon as a corruptor of innocence, or he saw him as an innocent about to be corrupted. If Chapman imagined that Lennon was a threat to the innocence of youth, he certainly took his time in doing anything about it. After all, the man who in his music sang the joys of "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds," and later posed nude on album covers while exhorting listeners to "open their thighs," was not exactly what one would call a samaritan. But Lennon's last album, "Double Fantasy," was, by contrast, a Girl Scout manual. This album, which came after a silence of six years, dealt largely with the joys of home life and fatherhood. There was little in the album's songs that could be considered threatening; and the interviews that Lennon gave to promote it showed that he had settled into a comfortable, somewhat embourgeoisified life of baking bread and clipping coupons. Surely, this John Lennon was not the sort of person likely to threaten the innocence of children or of anyone else.

It is more likely, then, that Chapman saw Lennon as an innocent who was himself about to be corrupted. Some problems arise here, but the idea becomes at least plausible if considered in tandem with *The Catcher in the Rye*. Holden Caulfield provides some useful standards by which to judge innocence. His older brother, D. B., is the novel's clearest example of innocence gone bad. D. B., it will be recalled, was apparently a writer of great promise who "sold out" and began to "prostitute himself" in Hollywood by writing cheap movie scripts. Commercial success at the expense of artistic integrity is, in *The Catcher in the Rye,* the worst expression of phoniness. Throughout the novel Holden despairs that his once-noble brother has fallen.

This model of the fallen artist is easily applicable to the world of Mark Chapman. As a teenager, he idolized the Beatles, and a large part of the charm of the Beatles lay in their absolute unwillingness to compromise their integrity for the sake of commercial gain, as Holden's brother D. B. had. As it happens, the Beatles made fabulous sums of money anyway, but they often risked both their fortune and their popularity in unorthodox creative ventures. Sometimes, as with the album "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band," they succeeded in spite of their heterodoxy. Other times, as with their disastrous merchandising firm Apple Corps., they failed. But they always preserved their dedication to their fans and their art, which made them easily the world's most exciting rock band, while other bands clung to tested, profitable, and secondhand formulas. When the Beatles disbanded in 1970, their fans—including, one imagines, Mark Chapman—watched with interest to see what the individual members would do. Could any of the four men who had formed the Beatles achieve anything like a similar success on his own? Ringo Starr and George Harrison pursued fairly steady and largely uninteresting solo careers. Paul McCartney and John Lennon, divided by the stresses that had disrupted the Beatles, took off in two wildly divergent directions. Salinger himself couldn't have wished for two characters whose careers more clearly defined the two sides of *The Catcher In the Rye* dilemma.

James Paul McCartney, as almost everyone who once cared for the Beatles is aware, became the most successful male pop artist the world has ever known, but in the process he completely alienated his former fans. The man who had written such songs as "Hey Jude," "Let It Be," and "Yesterday" now churned out material that was designed, almost scientifically, to sell. From a purely commercial standpoint, McCartney was several times more successful than the Beatles ever were, but he had, like Holden's older brother, clearly sold out in producing obviously commercial music. If Chapman held to the definitions of "phoney" and "nice" as outlined by J. D. Salinger, Paul McCartney had become a phoney.

Turn now to John Lennon. Lennon's solo career was easily the most erratic of the four former Beatles. He released a series of albums that were alternately brilliant and peculiar, sometimes both, and then he dropped out of sight. "Dropped out of sight" actually means that he stopped recording and dedicated six years to raising his son, Sean, while his wife, Yoko, managed their business affairs and sold

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holstein cows for enormous sums. While McCartney was so much in the news that even his toes were once photographed for *Time*, John Lennon—and all his various parts—were hidden from sight. No one has ever made much sense out of Lennon's post-Beatle years, but one thing is certain: in the code of rock music, he preserved his Beatle integrity. He was not a phoney. Even his artistic failures were dignified, and his self-imposed exile did nothing to damage but rather strengthened the claim of some music critics that Lennon was, after Elvis Presley, the "king of rock."

Lennon's exile suggests an interesting and possibly illuminating parallel to *The Catcher in the Rye* as it might have been interpreted by Mark Chapman. Possibly America's most famous recluse is J. D. Salinger. For more than twenty years Salinger has isolated himself in his bunker-like retreat in New Hampshire. Like Lennon, Salinger has preserved the mystique that surrounds his early work, and he has accomplished this simply by removing himself from society. This isolation has done nothing to damage but rather has strengthened the claim of some literary critics that Salinger is one of the more important American writers in the postwar era.

Salinger's retreat from society is anticipated in *The Catcher in the Rye*. On a date with the pretty but vapid Sally Hayes, Holden suddenly asks:

> How would you like to get the hell out of here? Here's my idea. I know this guy . . . we can borrow his car for a couple of weeks. What we could do is, tomorrow morning we could drive up to Massachusetts and Vermont, and all around there, see. It's beautiful as hell up there. . . . I have about a hundred and eighty bucks . . . we'll stay in these cabin camps and stuff . . .

Holden's plan is, obviously, unrealistic, a fact that, in the novel, Sally Hayes belabors at somewhat tedious length. But the desire to "get the hell out of here," which Holden expresses several times, is entirely consistent with the uncompromising line Holden draws between "nice" and "phoney," and his fantastical if winning desire to become a "catcher in the rye." "There were goddam phonies coming in the windows," Holden complains at one point. Thus overwhelmed, the logical recourse is escape. Salinger's own decision "to get the hell out of here" must mark one of the rare cases in literature in which an author has taken his character's advice.

Though one can hardly call holing up in the Dakota "getting the hell out of here," John Lennon did follow a course roughly like the one outlined by Holden. He, too, "got the hell out." If Chapman shared the views of Holden Caulfield, then the chances are fairly good that he very much admired Lennon's withdrawal from public life. When Lennon resurfaced in 1980, suddenly granting interviews and appearing in public, Chapman may have perceived a threat to the Salinger credo and a crack in the wall that protected Lennon's splendid innocence.

The self-promotion accompanying Lennon's re-entry into the world of high publicity was unlike anything he had ever done before, and it seems likely that Chapman found him listing dangerously toward commercialism. After six years of seclusion, news of John Lennon's doings was everywhere. The hermit of rock had become all too accessible, in a *People* magazine, vulgar way. In many respects he resembled Paul McCartney promoting his albums, which led John Lennon's fans to wonder, with some trepidation, what Lennon's long-awaited album would sound like.

Since his death, Lennon's last album, "Double Fantasy," has been hailed as a rock classic. At the time of its release, however, when Lennon was still alive, the album received a very lukewarm reception. In England, his home country, *The National Music Express* suggested that "the old man" ought to have stayed in retirement and pointed out striking similarities between this album and the work of Paul McCartney, which Lennon was known to have found distasteful. Fans who hoped for, or expected, another album of the quality of "Imagine" were disappointed.

We can only speculate, of course, upon what effect Lennon's re-emergence might have had on Mark Chapman. Perhaps Chapman had been perfectly content as long as Lennon remained in Salinger-like isolation. Now, however, Lennon thrust himself into the open with a McCartney-like publicity blitz and released what was generally acknowledged to be a mediocre piece of work. Lennon was in trouble; he was in danger of falling off the cliff, à la D. B. Caulfield and Paul McCartney. What could Mark Chapman do about it? If we examine the question with

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The Catcher in the Rye in mind, a most distressing, twisted solution arises. Simply put, it appears Chapman misread *The Catcher in the Rye*. He took the "catcher" passage to be the novel's solution, when in fact it is the crisis.

No one who has read *The Catcher in the Rye* will argue that Holden Caulfield was a seriously disturbed sixteen-year-old. He wanders through New York with a genuine desire, to quote an old Beatles tune, to "take a sad song and make it better," but he doesn't know how to begin. As a result he develops an all-purpose, self-protective cynicism. When challenged by his younger sister Phoebe to justify this cynicism, he offers the famous "catcher" speech. But the book doesn't end there. What Holden has outlined in his "some crazy cliff" plan, and in his earlier "get the hell out" plan, is impossible. Holden Caulfield wants to stop reality. He wants to keep the children in the rye field from growing up. But growing up is the natural order of things. It cannot be stopped. Yet Holden longs to do the impossible. This is what brings about his crisis in *The Catcher in the Rye*.

Can it be that Mark Chapman, devoted J. D. Salinger reader, had his own difficulty in dealing with reality and responsibility in a world of grown-ups? In addition to *The Catcher in the Rye*, Chapman was known to favor a song of Lennon's called "Strawberry Fields Forever." Like Salinger's rye fields, Lennon's strawberry fields offered a frozen, unrealistic approach to life; it promised an eternity in a land where, to quote from the song, "nothing is real." If Chapman was madly drawn to both Holden Caulfield's "catcher" and John Lennon's "Strawberry Fields," it is not inconceivable that he would have wanted Lennon himself to remain "caught" in his protective retreat, where "nothing is real." Especially now, with the release of the mediocre album "Double Fantasy," Mark Chapman could have viewed John Lennon poised on the edge of the crazy cliff, and it was up to him, Chapman, to play catcher in the rye.

So Chapman flew to New York and began a sojourn very much like the one that takes place in *The Catcher in the Rye*. Although it is difficult to know for certain how Chapman filled the time, he was in the city for two full days before the shooting. He is said to have switched hotels (as Holden did); walked out of a movie theater ("I hate the movies," Holden says, "don't even mention them to me"); and regaled a cab driver with tales of a forthcoming Lennon/McCartney album, which he claimed to be producing ("I'm a terrific liar," Holden admits, "I have to watch myself sometimes").

Now comes the large question: Why did Chapman shoot Lennon? Given his Holden Caulfield state of mind, wouldn't it have made more sense to invite Lennon out for a nightcap somewhere or to go skating at Radio City, there to caution him against selling out? But Chapman was a confused, disturbed man. There are no easy explanations for why he did what he did. One answer is suggested in the pages of *The Catcher in the Rye*. Chapman may have believed that the highest possible attainment, at least as viewed through Salinger's novel, would be to achieve that permanent state of innocence suggested in the "catcher" passage. Only one character in the *The Catcher in the Rye* manages that unimpeachable innocence—Holden's younger brother Allie. Allie is the only character in the novel, including Holden, who never shows any hint of phoniness, and who never will. How is this possible? It is possible only because Allie is dead.

Immediately preceding Caulfield's "catcher" speech, which Chapman found so significant and which he recited at his trial, there is a section in the novel in which Holden's sister Phoebe asks if her depressed brother can "name one thing" that he likes. Holden has a lot of trouble responding. He recalls a boy at school, James Castle, who, rather than taking back something he had said about a bully, jumped out of a fifth-floor window. Then he reveals what at first seems to be an unrelated piece of information: that he likes his brother Allie. "Allie's *dead!*" Phoebe cries, "You always say that! If somebody's dead and everything, and in *Heaven*, then it isn't really—"

"I know he's dead!" Holden returns. "Don't you think I know that? I can still like him though, can't I? Just because someone's dead, you don't just stop liking them, for God's sake—especially if they were about a thousand times nicer than the people you know that're *alive* and all."

In the traditional interpretation of the

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novel, Holden's reference to his brother is simply another indication of his unrealistic desire to freeze innocence and thwart phoniness. But Chapman, who wrote "This is my statement" in the flyleaf of his copy of the Salinger novel, was not a typical reader. To him, the "catcher" speech was the book's final and transcendent message, which would make Allie the real hero of *The Catcher in the Rye*. Allie, in this reading, is the only character to come out unscathed. Death, then, would have presented itself to Chapman as the only safeguard against loss of innocence.

Holden Caulfield and Mark Chapman were faced with the same crisis: an assault on innocence. Holden Caulfield could not find a way to preserve innocence forever and was forced to entertain the notion of growing up. If I am correct in my speculation, Chapman found a way. Taking as a model the only character in *The Catcher in the Rye* who achieved perpetual innocence, Chapman found his course clear. For John Lennon's innocence—which was essential to Chapman's own spiritual well-being—to remain intact, Lennon himself would have to die. Only then could his innocence, like Allie's, be preserved forever.

Unfortunately, this idea, as I have set it out here, is not as absurd or outrageous as it sounds. If Chapman's intention was to secure, and even to improve, the legend of John Lennon, the artist of perfect integrity, he succeeded. Gone now is the John Lennon who once smeared excrement on the walls of his dressing room; who claimed that the Beatles were a bigger item than Christ; and who appeared in a Los Angeles nightclub with a Kotex on his head. In his place is a sort of rock-and-roll Gandhi. Because of his violent death, anything about him that is base or even unkind has been erased. In the most extraordinary way, John Lennon today is viewed as a man of pristine innocence—"a genius of the spirit," Norman Mailer has called him. And all because Mark Chapman, standing outside the Dakota apartments, caught him in the rye.

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TEACHING

At Home in History: Werner Jaeger's Paideia

CLARA CLAIBORNE PARK

. . . m'insegnavate come l'uom s'etterna
Dante, *Divine Comedy*

How man makes himself eternal. It is what Brunetto Latini taught Dante, learning he found so important that he remembered his gratitude even in hell, even returned from Paradise. I first heard the words not in a course in Dante but in the mild Rhineland accent of Werner Jaeger of the Harvard classics department, in a course on Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*. I was a refugee from the philosophy department, majoring in an eleventh-hour mocked-up combination of Greek and English, in deference to the fact that I knew too little Latin to major in classics and that it was possible to read quite a lot of English at the last minute. I had no desire whatever to learn more about Aristotle. I knew enough, however, to know that I ought to take a course with Werner Jaeger—it didn't matter what.

It didn't. I would have liked it to be a course on Homer, of course, or Sophocles, or Aeschylus, whom Jaeger always wanted to write a book on but never did; I liked poetry. Having already learned from John Finley to see history as tragedy (it was 1943), I would have liked it to be a course on Thucydides. I liked history too; I couldn't but know that my own ideas and those of all my friends took their origin and half their meaning from the web of personal and political and social events around us as we emerged from the Depression and moved into the war. But in the Harvard philosophy department it did not seem to be so. If Spinoza erected his lonely thought into a great cathedral where a philosopher could be at home, no one encouraged us to think that that had anything to do with the perceptions and needs of a Jew in Amsterdam in the mid-seventeenth century, grinding lenses for a living, cut off both from his own people and from the culture around him. Certainly Aristotle came after Plato; how else could he have criticized the Theory of Ideas? We learned all that and wrote it down. But that he lived and worked in an Athens where the values of the Greek polis had already collapsed, that he was Plato's student until he was almost forty, that he wrote a poem as an altar offering in Plato's memory, that we actually possess it, that it concerns not Ideas but "Holy Friendship" for "the man whom it is not lawful for bad men even to praise"—no one had told us these things as we studied the four kinds of causes and the idea of the mean and learned how different Aristotle was from Plato. From Jaeger we learned that the work of Aristotle and Plato was anything but pure thought. It was not only that their thought had developed in time, both personal and public—any member of the philosophy department would have conceded that—but that we could not understand that thought without imagining ourselves into the personal and historical, into what it must have been to be Aristotle or Plato. For a Greek, he wrote later, "theory and life must always go together." Theory issued from life, and returned to renew it. The philosophy of Aristotle, as of Plato, was a practical, public activity, the activity of a whole human being, alive in society. It was that central synthesis of act and thought and value, of history and poetry and philosophy that he called, as the Greeks did, "paideia." It means something between "education" and "civilization," and its aim for Plato and Aristotle was, he told us, no less

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than *soteria*, their culture's safety and salvation.

Meaning inheres in history; Plato, re-creating in the loving circumstantiality of his dialogues the society of his youth, "confesses it in every line." Socrates, he wrote in his monumental *Paideia*, "breathes the air of history and is lit up by its rays." And Plato's whole work, he told us, was an attempt to explain a world in which Socrates *had* to die: "Around that fact he builds up the broadening circles of his philosophy." "It is impossible to separate his life from his work." Suddenly the chill marble took on the tint of living flesh.

Recent and remote, the presences of the past were all around us as he talked. Aristotle continued a tradition; he was not like Nietzsche, who "broke the tablets." (Jaeger had occupied Nietzsche's chair at Basel, but of course we did not know that.) And out of the past, the thought of Aristotle stretched forward into a future he could not know. But his future was our past, shaping us whether we knew it or not. The very first day Mr. Jaeger told us, who had thought we were among Greeks, that the fundamental difference between Catholicism and Protestantism is expressible in their opposite attitudes to Aristotle. Luther had thought Aristotle had made Aquinas pagan, but as soon as Lutherans had to build up a church and a dogma they found they needed him again. History's tablets are not so easily broken.

Professor Jaeger did not simplify the past, nor did he sentimentalize it. He insisted, as only a true historian can, that we see it in its own terms and not ours, and cautioned against the easy game of drawing contemporary parallels. Yet he gave us always the sense that we lived surrounded by the greatness of a past compounded of achievement and tragic failure and renewal in history. Living in time, we lived also *sub specie aeternitatis*. I heard those words first from him; he did not tell us they were Spinoza's. He may have thought we knew; he was always generous. But he was also realistic; he knew he couldn't tell us everything.

Sub specie aeternitatis. Come l'uom s'etterna. Curiously, I do not find the words in my notes, though I was the kind of student who wrote everything down. I had not yet, apparently, unlearned what is so well inculcated in college—that the definition of "irrelevant" is "not likely to be on the exam." But even though Dante was irrelevant, I remember how Mr. Jaeger, teacher as well as scholar, imagined our presuppositions and spoke to them: that knowing Dante was a Christian poet we would be assuming that "eternal" must carry its customary Christian meaning. But it doesn't; that way of making ourselves immortal has nothing to do with life after the death of the body. It describes the life of philosophic *theoria*, which Dante and his teacher got from the tenth book of the *Ethics*, from the tradition of Greek paideia as it still lived in thirteenth-century Florence. At that time Jaeger had not yet written the little book *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* that he called a "down-payment" on the work he doubted he would live to complete, the "comprehensive book on the historical continuity and transformation of the tradition of Greek paideia into the Christian centuries." Not until forty years later (fifty years after it was first published), preparing for this writing, did I read the astonishing essay on Tyrtaeus, in which that warlike poet's simple idea of a citizen's *areté*, his soldierly virtue, is traced through its ethical transformations in Xenophanes and Plato, to emerge transfigured in the rhythms of 1 Corinthians 13. But in his class we began to experience some inkling, according to our readiness, of what it might be to feel all time eternally present.

Exam time came. Two very young women bending over blue books, slowly puzzling out our translations, we looked up startled as the door opened. The exam was not half over; we had still an hour and a half to go. Nothing in our years of Harvard education, not even four months of Professor Jaeger's courtly friendliness, had prepared us for what we saw: his pale, luminous presence advancing upon us in soft benignity, bearing a tin of wafers. They were delicate, long, thin cylinders with chocolate inside; I cannot imagine how he had acquired such quintessentially European confections in wartime America. Hardly believing in the reality of this incursion, we partook and returned to our blue books.

Our astonishment at so simple an act needs some explanation in an era when small classes are demanded as if by right, and intimacy and first names have become cheapened by familiarity. As a Radcliffe student, my classes had generally been small, for Harvard and

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Radcliffe remained segregated by gender until the last year of the war, and students then as now did not crowd into upper-level courses in philosophy and Greek. Small or large, however, the lecture reigned supreme at Harvard; what in most small colleges would be considered teaching was left to graduate students with other things on their minds. I was accustomed not to being taught but to being lectured at, from notes yet unpublished or yellowed with age, brilliantly or dully, but always from a distance, whether I sat in a group of two hundred or (as in Ralph Barton Perry's course in ethics) at a table within three feet of the professor. It may not have been always so at Harvard; I had a friend who said he played tennis with a professor. But at Radcliffe the distance between student and teacher was unbridgeable. If there were office hours, I did not know them; Radcliffe undergraduates did not even know the names of most of the buildings in which their professors might have been found. The Widener Library was not open to us in those days, though a little reading room was provided for seniors working on theses. It would not have occurred to me to seek out a professor, nor do I remember ever asking a question in class. Teachers could suffer from this institutional perversity as well as students; I recall with shame John Wild, then in what must have been his early years of teaching, trying, not to start a discussion—there would have been no chance of that—but to elicit from his class on the *Gorgias* the obvious parallel between rhetoric, as Plato excoriated it, and modern advertising. He had breached Harvard etiquette; he must have studied elsewhere. We sat silent, sourly complacent at withholding the answer we knew he wanted, and after a sickening interval he had to supply it himself. But most professors seemed well content. So we were totally unprepared for a teacher who seemed to think it natural to offer us refreshments, to ask his classes—even the larger ones—to tea at his home, the only home of a Harvard professor I ever entered.

It was the more astonishing because of the aura of eminence with which Jaeger had come to Harvard. If Harvard's finest were out of reach, what could we expect from a Herr Professor in the full tradition of European formality, an international luminary who had been lured, we had heard, from Chicago to be a University Professor, free to teach anything he wished, with the unheard-of stipend of $25,000 a year? We had heard other things too. "Man must eat fables," wrote Edward Dahlberg, "or starve his soul to death," and students feed on heroic fables. Our story was that Mr. Jaeger had been Rector of the University of Berlin before he came to America, that he had refused to dismiss a Jewish professor, and that a Nazi gauleiter had slapped him in the face. This cannot have been so; biographical entries make no reference to a tenure as Rector, and though I cannot imagine Professor Jaeger failing to defend a colleague, the rest of the story remains equally without confirmation. Certainly, even if true, he would not have told it. The closest he ever came to commenting to us on the tragedy of twentieth-century history was in the dark May of 1944 (he had, I learn, become an American citizen the year before), when he mused, in some fifth-century connection I have forgotten, "And those who want to find their paradise on earth will find hell sometimes." Nor did he, who could imagine himself into the personal life of Plato and Aristotle, ever speak of his own. The autobiographical sketches he wrote late in life contain only a few muted sentences through which one can glimpse the reality of a political choice that meant loss and exile.

Even as a child, history was his starting point, a history, as he made clear, far too rich for nationalism. He was born into a Lutheran family in a corner of the Catholic Rhineland that had once been part of the Spanish empire: "The nearby borders of Holland and Belgium were a constant reminder of 'Europe'; so too was the palpable proximity of the Low German, Dutch, Flemish and French languages." At eight he began Latin, then five years later Greek, at a Catholic school named for Thomas à Kempis, "author of the *Imitatio Christi*, the best known and most widely translated of books." (That it is now no longer the Thomaeum but the Werner Jaeger Progymnasium would, I think, have elicited his most complex smile.) "All around me," he wrote, "stood the old walls and castles and thousand-year-old churches of the Middle Ages, the excavated fortresses and military highways of the Romans, the builders of the Rhenish cities. . . . From the beginning, the Roman empire in its final Christian and universal form was presented to us as a simple

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fact." The lower Rhineland still flew the red and white flag of the Church; only "a few newcomers . . . raised the black[,] white and red flag" of the German Empire. The roads over which he wandered as a boy "had not yet been usurped by the youth movement of a later day." That was as close as he came to mentioning Hitler.

Still, when that later day came, as a scholar of antiquity he might have lived quietly even in the world of National Socialism, protected by his nonpolitical eminence. He chose not to. We cannot know all the reasons, but one of them, recorded in the Harvard faculty memorial minute, suggests that there was a kernel of truth in our student legend, less flamboyant and more characteristic. Jaeger's luminous generalizations always rose out of minutely comprehended texts (often those he had himself established); in determining meaning, every phrase, to its last echo, must be weighted into its context. He was surrounded by texts when I last saw him, joyful over two manuscript pages, one in the Vatican and one in Cambridge, that he had just demonstrated belonged together—one more fragment of the eternal past salvaged for the future. So it is appropriate that the true story concerns the alteration of a text.

In 1936, Jaeger had held for fifteen years the chair of the great classical scholar Willamowitz at Berlin. There was no more-honored position in all Germany; he had reached it when he was barely thirty-three. Nineteen thirty-six was the Harvard tercentenary year, and he was delegated to represent the Prussian Academy of Sciences at the observances in Cambridge. His address was to end with a reference to the peaceful competition of America and Germany "in the service of humanity." The Ministry of Education censor required that he delete those last five words.

It was with a detachment worthy of Epictetus that he wrote much later the single reference, in all his published work, to what he had lost. "The writer of this paper found himself forced to give up the professorial chair of E. Curtius and Willamowitz and, like some of the ablest young men and like my revered older colleague, Professor E. Norden, go into exile abroad." (The reference to other colleagues is characteristic; he would have been the last to claim uniqueness.) One of his first publications after he came to America was a lecture he could not have delivered in Germany, a characteristically detailed and original exploration of the earliest Greek references to Jews and Judaism. But he spoke to us no more of anti-Semitism than he did of twentieth-century politics. Only now, looking him up in the *Dictionary of American Biography,* do I find that his wife was Jewish.

It is not a dramatic story. Many things combine to force such a decision, and professors live like professors, not like heroes. But though the young love drama, I think we would have accepted the revision of our legend. Besides his classes in Greek, Professor Jaeger gave a yearly course open to the whole college; in it he explored what he told us was "the central idea of all Greek culture: the development of human *areté*." That was what his paideia—and *Paideia*—was all about: human excellence, changing yet constant, as the warlike heroism of the Homeric heroes was enriched and refined over centuries into that heroism of mind and spirit that Plato experienced in his own great teacher and memorialized for time to come. "Other nations made gods, kings, spirits; the Greeks alone made men." We had learned enough from him, even then, to understand that for him the simple words "in the service of humanity" could not be expendable.

I have gone rather long without giving those details of manner and appearance that are supposed to lend portraiture conviction. In a brief memoir written during the last year of his life, Professor Adela Fiske evokes the outer man, unchanged in the twenty years since I had known him—briefcase, beret, umbrella, rubbers (yes, I had forgotten the rubbers, the rubbers bring him back), a likely professor, an unlikely hero. But once beyond such accoutrements, a certain indefiniteness of feature, a softness of expression, of body, even, make description difficult. It was an indoor face, very pale, in some ways tentative, lips not firmly set even when closed, expressing not determination but a kind of responsive readiness. The year he died, someone took four photographs of him, in series. It is characteristic that they show not a state but a process, the gradual realization of a smile. Certainly he was always ready to smile with us at some instance of the penetrating yet gentle humor that, while not rare, we somehow

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never expected from him. Gentle, modest, unassuming, mild, benign, serene—the words that present themselves are accurate and unavoidable, yet radically misleading. The fault, of course, is not in them but in us if they suggest the weak and wishy-washy. For Mr. Jaeger's serenity was a positive, an educative force—among other things, it educated the turbulent and demanding young to realize that there might be some meaning to the words we read in the *Ethics*, that the most perfected human happiness is to be found in the activity of contemplation, *theoria*, intensive *seeing*, and that it is in this activity, being closest to the divine, that we can *athanatizein*, achieve a life beyond mortality—as far, injects Aristotle, ever the realist, as is possible for a human being. (It was at this point that Professor Jaeger told us about Ser Brunetto.) I might as well, then, give over physical description. What comes to mind, rather than any image, is a color—a steady, shining grey, so milky and so luminous that it is hardly a color at all.

This scholar's serenity had not always been his. In the Germany of the Weimar Republic, in those years of the twenties that he once said future historians might see as our century's most creative period, he had been a public figure, fighting to influence German education, founding a magazine to bring classical culture to the layman, defending what came to be called The Third Humanism against the ever-encroaching emphasis on the practical and the contemporary. It was hard, as Professor Finley said in his memorial address, even for his Harvard colleagues to see the public man of Berlin in "the serene figure . . . in the golden summer of his Cambridge years," whose world seemed to be the manuscript-filled study at the top of Widener. Students, of course, could not see it at all. But we sensed that there was nothing negative in his detachment. He had quoted a pregnant sentence of one of the Seven Wise Men, like him an exile, as so many were in the turbulent world of antiquity: *Omnia mea mecum porto.* All that is mine I carry with me. What he carried with him was his paideia.

Mr. Jaeger was unique among the professors I have known in the harmony—the identity, indeed—between what he professed and what he was. Paideia was the subject of the more than fifty years of his scholarship, the Hellenic paideia realized first in itself, and later as it was transformed into what he called "the paideia of Christ." He was a teacher, and he conceived the entire cultural history of man—poetry, philosophy, natural science, the whole heritage of written self-expression—as teaching. The English subtitle of *Paideia* is *The Ideals of Greek Culture.* Faithful enough to the contents of the book, it misses, as Jaeger later pointed out, the emphasis of the German subtitle, *Die Formung des grieschischen Menschen.* What concerned him was the *forming* of a human being. In *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia* he shows how Gregory of Nyssa, "the most truly Greek of the Christian fathers," recurs constantly to the basic image of *morphosis*, formation. It implied, for Gregory and for him, "the essential identity of all educational activity and the work of the creative artist, painter, and sculptor." This was the central meaning of his scholarship and of his teaching: the making, not of gods or kings, but of fully human beings. He quotes in *Paideia* that culminating section of Plato's *Apology* which is Socrates' description of his "service to God": "For all that I do is to go round and persuade young and old among you not to give so much of your attention to your bodies and your money as to the perfection of your souls." Jaeger comments: "Socrates says that he 'philosophizes.' Obviously, he does not mean by this that he engages in abstract thought, but that he exhorts and teaches." And for Plato, he observes: "All human effort to reach the truth is ultimately justified . . . not (as for the great natural philosophers of the era before Socrates) by the urge to solve the riddle of the world, but by the necessity of knowledge in maintaining and shaping human life." Plato's work was a public, a political, activity, he told us, as all Greek literature had been, its aim "to bring the true society into being as the proper milieu for the achievement of the highest virtue possible to man." It was "inspired by the educational spirit of Socrates, whose aim was not only to see the true nature of things, but to do good."

Socrates, Plato, Aristotle—all were teachers. So were those last voices of the Greek polis, Demosthenes and Isocrates. So was Thucydides, who wrote his terrible dissection of a society at war as a *ktēma es aiei*, a possession for always, that men might be

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taught and remember how like causes produce like effects. (In 1943, Professor Jaeger spoke to us of Thucydides' chapter on how the pressures of war corrupted moral standards and the meanings of words together. He advised us to learn it by heart. I wish I had.)

The Greek tragedians were teachers, too, their characters wrestling out insoluble conflicts of ideas and values before an audience of thousands of citizens. (Are Antigone and Creon both right and wrong, Professor Jaeger asked us, contradiction being, as Hegel thought, the essence of reality? Or is Antigone innocent, as Jebb claimed, and Creon a criminal, misusing a political power in itself inherently bad? "And you will go on answering this question," he told us, "as long as you live.") Poets were teachers, their singing voices essential to the understanding even of political revolution, Homer first among them and fundamental, "the educator of Hellas."

Mr. Jaeger had the quality that Aristotle noted in Homer, of seeing human beings in the integrity of their individuality, as fundamentally not mean but noble. However the preoccupations and programs and values of those contentious Greeks contrasted and conflicted, he entered into each of them with equal sympathy. "I have already been a boy and a girl, and a bush, and a bird, and a dumb fish out of the sea." Empedocles, wrote Jaeger, "speaks of all these various forms of life with the loving inflexion of one who has felt their existence from within, and to whom none of them is any more remote than he is remote from himself." Coming across these words long after I had known him, I seemed to understand for the first time that curious indefiniteness—the modesty of the chameleon-scholar, responsive like Keats's chameleon-poet to the manifold shapes of areté. That luminous grey was the color of Negative Capability.

Paideia was for Jaeger a human relationship. That was what the chocolate wafers affirmed. Greek paideia taught through exemplars; rereading *Paideia* for this article, I recognized what his had been. "Unless we realise to the full Socrates' concern for the individual to whom he is speaking, we cannot understand *what* he is saying. Although the philosopher may consider that relationship unessential in the abstract, academic sense, Plato shows that for Socrates it was essential." Plato's Socrates "holds friendship to be not only the chain that binds every political association, but the real form [the Platonic Form, what else?] of every productive connection between men. That is why he does not speak of his 'pupils,' as the sophists do, but of his 'friends.' " Jaeger's students wrote him letters; he always answered, in the regular and beautiful script that seemed another mark of his life's unhurried harmony. He was uniquely accessible. The undergraduate writer of a *Crimson* Faculty Profile recorded with Harvard-earned incredulity that "he will stop work to talk for hours—literally hours—with any student who comes in on any pretext whatever," and added that he always knew the names, abilities, and problems of his students, "unlike many insignificant section men." Some student essays, never picked up, are preserved among his papers in the Harvard Archives. One, which did not receive a high grade, is gently criticized for its loose organization, a fault, he added, for which its originality went far to compensate. There was no conflict between encouragement and rigor in his harmonious paideia.

During his American years, the theme of Christian paideia moved from the periphery to the center of his scholarship. As he worked on the great edition of Gregory of Nyssa that Willamowitz had suggested to him in 1909 while he was still a student, Jaeger was deeply drawn to the Father whose word for the monk's life was "philosophical" and for whom the Bible was "not law but education." As a master of that close reading which today's students must learn via the techniques of the New Criticism but which is inherent in the interpretation of classical texts, Jaeger found in Gregory's vocabulary the manifestation of his continuing theme. "Instead of saying 'the prophet says' or 'Christ says,' as would be most natural for us, he writes innumerable times, 'the prophet Isaiah educates us or the apostle educates us' (paideuei)." In Gregory's mind, "the way in which the Spirit speaks to the human race in the Scripture is that of the wise educator who never forgets the narrow limits of his pupils' capacity." Professor Jaeger knew our limits well enough—he wrote in 1960, the year before his death, that to learn what classical scholarship was like in a country where classical humanism did not exist,

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one must come to America. Stumbling through our Greek or Latin—or worse, studying, through the veil of translation, words on the untranslatability of each one of which he could have given a full lecture—we were not like the students he had had, that he might still have had, in Germany. Yet he never made us feel our inadequacy. If our Greek was imperfect and slow, very well, he would have us buy the Loeb with its double text; important as the words were, more important was what could survive translation. If Dante, or Hegel, or Nietzsche, or St. Thomas were only names to us, he would give us a phrase or a sentence or a reflection to make us vow that one day they would be more. Like all great teachers, he met us where we were, selecting from his vast storehouse what we were ready for, which was, of course, a tiny proportion of what he knew, of what was relevant, and even, surely, of what he deemed essential, recognizing that each stage of learning has its integrity. He did have some students on the graduate level in whom he could take a scholar's satisfaction; anyone who reads the notes that are, as he always insisted, an essential part of his books—containing the arguments too detailed for the general reader who was always in his mind—will note the generous references to the monographs of his students. But like the great Willamowitz, whose name we learned to repeat with reverence, he was content to give "lectures of general interest for a wide audience of nonclassicists." One does not limit access to paideia. *Paideia* itself was written for that wide audience, all quotations willingly translated out of the originals. He wrote to Professor Fiske, after a happy week spent with her students at Manhattanville, his credo as a teacher and, perhaps, as a Christian:

> What I can do for another human being and its growth has always been for me of first importance since it is my natural way of communicating with the world outside me and the strongest root of my existence. Without it the *Paideia* would never have been undertaken or become possible at all. Mere technical scholarship would not be enough to create it. And so everything I have written is part of my life. The religious and theological problem also has been there from the start, it is not a recent addition.

He told the girls—"the choir of muses," he wrote to one of them afterward—

> To study Greek is to go to the very source, as Cicero tells us to do, *ite ad fontes;* to the ultimate source, Homer, the lyric and tragic poets, Plato, thus living again the development of the human spirit, seeing the whole breadth and depth of human experience taking form and shape for the first time. What does "Literature" mean? letters? writing? No, it means the form of human life; to experience what it means to become human . . . to see like Lucretius the walls of this world recede, *moenia mundi discedunt,* the universe open up before you. It is something no one can understand who has not experienced it, it is liberation, a revelation of what it really means to be free.

It is, of course, the meaning of liberal education, the education proper to the areté of free human beings.

The word "radiance" keeps coming forward. The Harvard colleagues who spoke at his memorial service, John Finley and Krister Stendahl, both used it; writing to me at his death, another of his students spoke of "the radiance of his mind and soul." John Ciardi, translating Inferno XV, made Ser Brunetto "a radiance among men"; it was years before I came to the original and realized that the words were Ciardi's own addition. I did not grudge him them; he must have had such a teacher. Of course it is natural to think of the mind's influence in metaphors of light. I think of Finley himself—an electrical storm of ideas and passion—as immediate, as exciting, and as personally remote; of John Arthos of Michigan, layers of cloud with flashes of brightness rewarding the eager glimpser. Radiance is different—steadily, equally *there*, to be experienced by all within its range. Where else does the idea of the halo come from?

Hagiography, alas, entails a concomitant loss in credibility. Yet our teachers can give us nothing more precious than the capacity for admiration; hagiography today is a genre too much neglected. After forty years I write still as a reverential undergraduate, in no position to sketch in the warts and deficiencies that now seem requisite to carry conviction. The biographical note in the *DAB* recalls a review of *Paideia*, pointing to an elitism that a rabid nationalism could misuse; the note emphasizes rather his book on Aristotle, "which changed all subsequent study of the philosopher," and notes that though *Paideia* was thought in his lifetime to be his great achievement, "the volumes are rarely read by schol-

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ars today." I am not a classical scholar and I cannot say. They don't seem outdated to me, and I am glad to see they have recently been reissued in paperback. Certainly Jaeger's paideia had its limits; we live now in a wider world for which a wider past determines an even more uncertain future. I cannot think, however, that widening horizons have made obsolete the ancient definition of the cultured man with which Jaeger introduced the first volume: the philologue "is he who loves words and is serious about paideia." "Is serious"? There is no translating *spoudazōn*, one of those wonderful Greek words in which an adjective or a noun takes on all a verb's dynamism, converting being to action, reminding us that, as Aristotle said, virtue is not a mere settled state, but an activity, an *energeia*. *Athanatizein*. To achieve immortality. *Philokalein*. To love the beautiful. *Philosophein*. To love wisdom. Werner Jaeger lived to teach us that there was once a culture, a paideia, in which these were single, necessary verbs, and that we are its heirs.

That culture seems even more expendable now than when he fought for it in Berlin, even in colleges that proclaim the liberal arts. Hardly anyone studies Greek, of course, or has any idea why one might want to do so. The Great Books courses that opened so many minds in the postwar years are now difficult to find. Unless pursued with "before 1800" requirements, students avoid courses in the past, even of their own culture; one of my students, a theater major, complained that Shakespeare has "a writing style which is practically foreign." The economy contracts and vocationalism reigns. Yet I find that students still respond when I tell them what Boris Pasternak wrote in *Doctor Zhivago:* "that man does not die like a dog in a ditch, but at home in history." Though they may not know why, they know what it is to be homeless. Pasternak, who translated Shakespeare for Mother Russia, who combined both Jewish and Christian paideia, knew in himself what I learned from Professor Jaeger. The history we cannot do without is the paideia we share, the record of the developing, resilient experience of human areté as our culture has given us to understand it. We may seek—and find—new perspectives to enrich that tradition, but we abandon it to our inexpressible loss, a loss no less devastating because so many cannot miss what they never had. Without our paideia we make ourselves what Werner Jaeger could never be, exiles of the spirit.

In the first essay in this series on great teachers, Edmund Wilson closed his tribute to Christian Gauss with Dante's words. They are words for which our need is permanent.

> Che in la mente m'e fitta, ed or m'accora,
> la cara e buona imagine paterna
> di voi, quando nel mondo ad ora ad ora
>
> m'insegnavate come l'uom s'etterna;
> e quant'io l'abbia in grado, mentr'io vivo
> convien che nella mia lingua si scema.

In Ciardi's English:

> For that sweet image, gentle and paternal
> you were to me in the world when hour by hour
> you taught me how man makes himself eternal
>
> lives in my mind, and now strikes to my heart;
> and while I live, the gratitude I owe it
> will speak to men out of my life and art.

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What Do We Know About Neanderthals and Cro-Magnon Man?

RICHARD G. KLEIN

Although nearly everyone has heard of the Neanderthals, few non-anthropologists have a clear idea of just who they were, when they lived, what they really looked like, what they did for a living, what their "culture" was like, and how they are related to modern people. In the popular imagination, they are commonly featured as brutish contemporaries of the dinosaurs. In fact, the first Neanderthals stepped on earth at least 65 million years after the last dinosaur died, and the archaeological record now informs us that they sometimes exhibited a concern for comrades that was far from brutish.

The history of the discovery of the Neanderthals is a fascinating story in itself. In 1856, workers quarrying limestone in the Neander Valley (*Neanderthal* in Old German) near Düsseldorf, Germany, discovered numerous ancient bones in a cave. Most of the bones were discarded, but some found their way into the hands of a local schoolteacher, who realized that they came from a very peculiar-looking human being. The teacher brought the bones to the attention of a well-known professor of anatomy, who revealed them to the world as the remains of a barbarian who probably lived in Europe even before the Celts and the Germans.

At first no one seriously considered the possibility that the Neanderthal fossil might represent a race of people who had lived in Europe before modern people evolved. Part of the reason was the intellectual climate of the time (it was still three years before Darwin would publish his *Origin of Species*), and part was that the find was an isolated one and there was no evidence that the bones were geologically very old. It was only in the late 1880s, after the idea of evolution had become intellectually more acceptable and the skeletons of two other Neanderthals had been scientifically excavated in a Belgian cave, that the Neanderthals came to be regarded as a variety of fossil people.

The excavations in the Belgian cave, known as Spy, uncovered stone artifacts, together with bones of woolly mammoth and woolly rhinoceros, in the same deposits as the Neanderthal bones. The implication was that the Neanderthals had lived a very long time ago. We now know that they appeared in Europe at least 130,000 years ago and that they disappeared from there between 50,000 and 35,000 years ago, the exact time perhaps depending upon the place.

Although more than a century has passed since the discovery of the Neanderthals, there is considerable uncertainty about their origin. The principal difficulty is that the human fossil record in Europe is spotty before 130,000 years ago. However, there are some fossils older than 130,000 years that appear to anticipate the typical Neanderthal morphology. This suggests that the Neanderthals evolved locally from yet more ancient Europeans.

Most specialists now agree that the Neanderthals were anatomically similar enough to modern people to be placed in the same species—*Homo sapiens*. An admittedly speculative implication of the terminology is that Neanderthals and modern people could interbreed. In order to indicate that, important similarities aside, the Neanderthals were still strikingly different from modern humans,

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many specialists place the two types of people in separate subspecies. Thus, modern humans become *Homo sapiens sapiens* and the Neanderthals become *H. sapiens neanderthalensis*.

Sometimes the vernacular term "Neanderthal" and the scientific name *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis* are used to refer to people who lived anywhere in the world between 130,000 and 50,000 to 35,000 years ago. However, the terms should really only be applied to people who occupied Europe and the Near East (southwestern Asia) during this interval. Still-sparse fossils indicate that the people who occupied Africa and the Far East between 130,000 and 50,000 to 35,000 years ago were quite different from the Neanderthals. Many new discoveries will be necessary, however, before we can characterize these ancient Africans and Asians as completely as we can now characterize their Neanderthal contemporaries.

The successors to the Neanderthals in Europe were the people we know popularly as the Cro-Magnons. They take their name from the Cro-Magnon rock shelter in southwestern France, where their skeletons were discovered in 1868. Curiously, this discovery slowed the spread of evolutionary ideas, for the skeletons were from anatomically modern people, while the associated animal bones and stone tools indicated great antiquity. For a while, therefore, it was possible to believe that even if people had lived in Europe before recorded history, they had always been modern in appearance.

However, beginning in the latter part of the last century, scientific excavations were carried out at numerous sites that had been occupied by both Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons. Cro-Magnon relics consistently overlay Neanderthal ones, and it became clear that however old the Cro-Magnons might be, they were geologically younger than the Neanderthals. Thanks largely to the radiocarbon dating method, we now know they had, in fact, replaced the Neanderthals virtually everywhere in Europe by 35,000 years ago.

The term "Cro-Magnon" has often been applied to all anatomically modern human fossils. Technically, however, it should be applied only to those people whose skeletons closely resemble the ones found in the Cro-Magnon rock shelter. Skeletons found elsewhere in the world, including other parts of Europe, indicate early anatomically modern people who differed from the narrowly defined Cro-Magnons to about the same degree as modern populations differ from one another today. There is thus a very real sense in which the term "Cro-Magnon" can be extended to include all living people. But I will use the term here in its popular sense to refer only to those anatomically modern people who lived after the Neanderthals and before the end of the last ice age, about 10,000 years ago.

The Cro-Magnons require little description. Generally speaking, they were perhaps somewhat taller and more heavily muscled than many of their living descendants, at least in Europe. Dressed in appropriate clothing, they would attract no special notice anywhere in the world today. The same would not be true of the Neanderthals, whose large, elongate skulls, prominent brow ridges, retreating foreheads, forward-projecting mid-facial regions, and usually chinless lower jaws would certainly provoke stunned stares. This sense of real difference would be reinforced by their thick, powerfully muscled trunks and limbs and their muscular, stubby-looking hands and feet.

The Neanderthals possessed remarkably massive limb bones, capable of withstanding stress that would fracture the bones of anatomically modern people. This probably reflects a way of life in which the body was used to perform many functions for which the later Cro-Magnons used tools and weapons. An additional important point is that many more calories would have been necessary to build and fuel a Neanderthal body than a Cro-Magnon one, and thus, a given amount of food would have supported fewer Neanderthals than Cro-Magnons.

Neanderthal limbs were not only more massive than Cro-Magnon ones, they had different proportions. For instance, in Neanderthals, the arm below the elbow and the leg below the knee were remarkably short. As a result, compared to the Cro-Magnons, the Neanderthals would have lost relatively little body heat through their extremities. The Neanderthals' foreshortened limbs may thus represent a bodily adaptation to the very cold climate conditions that most of them experienced in Europe. However, the Cro-Magnons experienced a similar cold climate, and their limbs do not exhibit foreshortening. Again,

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the reason is probably that they had devised cultural means—closely tailored clothing, in particular—for accomplishing technologically something that the Neanderthals accomplished physically.

It is important to point out that there was some physical variability among Neanderthals living in different places. European Neanderthals, in particular, displayed the typical or "classic" features that I have listed above. The classic pattern also characterized some of their Near Eastern contemporaries, but other Near Easterners departed from it in the direction of modern people, and it is quite possible to argue that modern people evolved out of Neanderthals in the Near East at the same time that European Neanderthals remained unchanged or became even more Neanderthal-like. Much depends on the still unresolved chronological ordering of critical Near Eastern fossils, which unfortunately lie beyond the secure range of conventional radiocarbon dating.

The course of human evolution elsewhere in the world at the time the Neanderthals lived remains essentially unestablished. As I have said, the term Neanderthal has sometimes been used to refer to archaic-looking people who lived in Africa and the Far East. However, none of the fossils to which the term has been applied really resemble the Neanderthals very closely, and many of them are probably much older. There are hints that anatomically modern people may already have appeared in sub-Saharan Africa more than 50,000 years ago, while Neanderthals inhabited both Europe and the Near East. But secure demonstration of this remains a task for the future.

The evidence for Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon behavior, or "culture," is obviously limited to the artifacts, house ruins, fireplaces, graves, and other items that archaeologists can uncover by excavation. Artifacts that were certainly or almost certainly made by Neanderthals have been excavated at a wide variety of sites in Europe and the Near East. These artifacts are commonly placed in a single cultural tradition variably known as Middle Paleolithic or Mousterian. The term Mousterian is used especially in Europe, where it derives from an early important discovery of probable Neanderthal tools at the site of Le Moustier in southwestern France.

The most abundant artifacts in Mousterian assemblages are stone flakes, on which the Mousterians frequently modified or retouched one or more edges to produce pieces that archaeologists call "scrapers," "points," "knives," "denticulates," and so forth. By considering the number of retouched edges, their orientation with respect to one another (for instance, parallel or converging), their shape (straight, convex, or concave), the abruptness of the retouch, the thickness of the piece, and other criteria, archaeologists have defined a relatively large number of different kinds of scrapers, points, and other tools. The names sometimes suggest that the functions of the tool types are known, but, in fact, specific function generally remains elusive. It is possible, perhaps even probable, that different pieces known by the same name were often used in very different ways.

Mousterian or Middle Paleolithic assemblages are remarkably similar over vast areas and long time spans, and, in fact, very similar sorts of tools were made in the same interval (from sometime before 130,000 years ago to perhaps 40,000 to 35,000 years ago) over most of sub-Saharan Africa, where the assemblages are generally referred to as Middle Stone Age. Differences among Mousterian and Middle Stone Age assemblages tend to be not so much in the types of tools they contain as in the relative numbers of the various types. It is probable that much of this numerical variation reflects differences in the particular activities that culturally similar or identical groups undertook at different sites rather than cultural differences among the groups. Much of the remaining variability may be owing to local differences in the raw material available for stone tool manufacture. Tool types that are unique to particular places or time intervals are rare, and the overall impression is of remarkably little cultural differentiation through time and space, even in the face of marked differences in environment.

Neanderthals and their contemporaries in Africa and elsewhere probably used skins, wood, and other perishable materials to manufacture a wide range of artifacts that have long since disappeared. Chance finds of wooden artifacts in special preservative conditions demonstrate at least the occasional use of wood. Yet one widely available raw mate-

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rial that seems to have been little used was bone. The bones of animals that Mousterian and Middle Stone Age people killed or ate have been preserved at many sites, but bones used as tools are quite rare. This is particularly true if we put aside bones whose use was probably only casual or momentary and focus on formal tools—that is, ones clearly fashioned to a standardized, repetitive form, presumably with relatively long-term use in mind.

Along with formal bone tools, other artifacts that are conspicuously absent at sites occupied by the Neanderthals and their contemporaries are pieces clearly interpretable as art objects or items of personal decoration, such as beads or pendants. Since the succeeding Cro-Magnons made many (though by no means all) of their art objects and personal ornaments from bone, it is possible that Neanderthals failed to make art objects in part because they failed to recognize bone as a material that could be carved, cut, or ground into standardized forms.

Beyond artifacts, excavations at sites occupied by Neanderthals and their contemporaries have uncovered graves and other nonremovable objects that offer further insight into Neanderthal behavior. As far as we know, the Neanderthals were among the first, if not the first, people to bury their dead intentionally. The graves are generally simple affairs, with few or no grave offerings, but they suggest at least some rudimentary concern with the fate of dead comrades. Moreover, the deceased sometimes display skeletal deformities or pathologies that would have incapacitated them for some time before their death. The implication is inescapable that sick people received important material and, perhaps, emotional support from their healthier companions.

The Neanderthals are the stereotypic "cave men," and it is certainly true that they and their contemporaries took advantage of cave mouths and rock shelters wherever these were available. However, in areas where there were no caves or rock shelters, they were clearly capable of surviving in open-air encampments, at least some of which have provided what appear to be the ruins of structures. Even where caves were present, the Neanderthals and their contemporaries often built camps outside them, and there is evidence that they modified cave floors or mouths to improve drainage or cut down on drafts. In both caves and open-air sites, they almost always built fires for cooking and for providing warmth. Although the Neanderthals were not the first people to use fire, the near ubiquity of fireplaces in their sites indicates they may have been among the first to know how to make it.

The culture of the Cro-Magnons, succeeding that of the Neanderthals and their contemporaries sometime between 50,000 and 35,000 years ago, was different from that of the Neanderthals in important respects. In Europe and the Near East, the stone artifact assemblages left behind by the Cro-Magnons tend to be dominated by stone flakes that are at least twice as long as they are wide. Such pieces are known to archaeologists as "blades." In Neanderthal (Middle Paleolithic) assemblages, blades are usually much rarer and less carefully manufactured. Often the Cro-Magnons retouched the ends of blades to make "endscrapers." Like the blades on which they are made, endscrapers are relatively scarce in Neanderthal assemblages, where retouch was most often applied to the edges of ordinary flakes, producing "sidescrapers."

The Cro-Magnons also modified blades into a wide variety of other stone tool types, of which the most distinctive is probably the burin, so called because it resembles the modern metal engraving tool known by that name in French. Burins tend to be rare in Neanderthal assemblages, and where they are present, they are generally crude or casual in form, as if they were manufactured by accident. As a result of the prominence of burins and blades in Cro-Magnon artifact assemblages in Europe and the Near East, the assemblages are often known as "blade and burin industries." More formally and less descriptively, they are commonly designated "Upper Paleolithic."

Beyond distinctive stone artifacts, Upper Paleolithic assemblages are differentiated from Middle Paleolithic (Neanderthal) ones by the frequent presence of standardized bone tool types (the points, awls, hide-burnishers, etc., of archaeologists) and art objects, including ornaments or items of personal decoration. The abundance of bone implements and art objects may be linked to the prominence of burins in Upper Paleolithic

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sites, since many burins were probably used to fashion bone tools and to engrave artistic designs on bone and other materials. Besides bone (and related substances, especially antler and ivory), art was also expressed in rock sculpture and engraving and, in at least one instance, even in baked clay. Finally, of course, it is all but certain that the famous cave paintings, known especially from northern Spain and southwestern France, were executed by Upper Paleolithic (Cro-Magnon) people.

A further distinctive aspect of the Upper Paleolithic is the degree of internal variability through time and space. Regionally and temporally restricted stone and bone artifact types are common, leading to a multiplicity of named Upper Paleolithic cultures that replace each other quite frequently in both time and space. The amount of cultural change and differentiation that is implied is much greater than for the Middle Paleolithic. It suggests an innovative capacity in Upper Paleolithic people similar to that of their historic descendants, who are, of course, also known for the remarkable diversity of their cultures.

The impression of great cultural differentiation during Upper Paleolithic times is further reinforced by the emergence of the Later Stone Age in sub-Saharan Africa, supplanting the Middle Stone Age there at about the same time (50,000 to 35,000 years ago) that the Upper Paleolithic replaced the Middle Paleolithic to the north. Specific Later Stone Age cultures are not only quite different from specific Upper Paleolithic ones, but they replace each other in time and space with a frequency recalling that in the Upper Paleolithic. Like the Upper Paleolithic, the Later Stone Age also differs from what preceded it in the presence of formal bone tools and of art objects. There is, in fact, a sense in which the Later Stone Age may be regarded as a sub-Saharan equivalent of the Upper Paleolithic, though it is less well studied.

Like their predecessors, Upper Paleolithic people and their contemporaries buried the dead, but unlike earlier graves, Upper Paleolithic ones often contain special artifacts or animal bones that are reasonably interpreted as grave goods or offerings. Further, like their predecessors, Upper Paleolithic people inhabited cave mouths and rock shelters where these were available, and where necessary, they modified them to make them more comfortable. They also occupied open-air sites, and almost every such site that has been carefully excavated has provided evidence of ancient structures, sometimes relatively elaborate and remarkably large. Comparably large, elaborate ruins have not yet been convincingly demonstrated at any Middle Paleolithic (or earlier) site, and at least tentatively, it is possible to argue that group size was frequently larger in the Upper Paleolithic. Almost certainly, Upper Paleolithic populations were denser. This is suggested by the fact that open-air Upper Paleolithic sites rich in artifacts, bones, ruins, and other cultural debris are far more numerous per unit time than Middle Paleolithic ones in areas where comparisons are possible.

Greater population density perhaps facilitated the movement of high-quality stone raw material, shell, and other materials over scores or even hundreds of kilometers in the Upper Paleolithic period. Such movement is unknown for earlier periods. Finally, cultural capacities presumably reflected in the differences between Upper and Middle Paleolithic artifacts and sites made it possible for Upper Paleolithic people to occupy some very harsh environments—especially northeastern Asia —that seem to have been beyond the capabilities of their predecessors. It was the Upper Paleolithic occupation of northeastern Asia that in turn made possible the colonization of the Americas, which almost certainly occurred across a dry-land bridge that linked Siberia and Alaska during Upper Paleolithic times. Another "New World" that was perhaps first colonized during the Upper Paleolithic interval was Australia. Here the obstacle was not an inhospitable environment between inhabited and uninhabited lands, but a water barrier that required the development of seaworthy boats.

Neanderthals and nearly all Cro-Magnon people lived by hunting animals and gathering wild plant foods. Domestication of animals, and perhaps of plants, is documented only for some of the very latest Cro-Magnons who lived in the Near East, beginning perhaps 12,000 years ago.

Excepting charred wood and seeds, plant tissues are far less likely than bones to survive the ravages of time. There are, in fact, no

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Neanderthal sites and very few Cro-Magnon sites where the plant residue of the diet is demonstrably preserved. As a consequence, there is a natural tendency to emphasize hunting in any discussion of Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon economy. In the higher latitudes of Eurasia, where Neanderthals and Cro-Magnon peoples often occupied environments with few plant foods suitable for people, it is quite probable that hunting was the major source of food. But in many lower latitude environments, gathering was probably more important, as it is, for example, among recently observed hunter-gatherers in the Kalahari Desert of southern Africa.

Keeping in mind that animals provided only a portion of the diet, the animal remains that are preserved at many sites may still illuminate the general nature of the Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon food quest. The animal bones suggest there were some basic similarities in hunting behavior between the two kinds of people. Thus, the principal animal species represented at both Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon sites are small and medium-sized ungulates—deer, horses, and bison at Middle and Upper Paleolithic sites in Europe and various antelopes, pigs, and zebras at Middle and Later Stone Age ones in Africa.

There is no evidence that either Neanderthals or Cro-Magnons regularly hunted the largest and probably most dangerous prey species available—rhinoceroses and elephants. Elephant (mammoth) bones are abundant at some Central and East European Middle and Upper Paleolithic sites, but in each instance they probably served as constructional elements in houses. The bones may thus have been scavenged from long-dead animals. Chemical analyses in one instance have shown that the mammoths involved probably died at very different times, perhaps even centuries apart. Similarly, there is no evidence that either Neanderthals or Cro-Magnons actively hunted the largest available carnivores, such as lions and hyenas, which were widespread in both Europe and Africa. It is very probable that, like recently observed hunter-gatherers, both Neanderthals and Cro-Magnons enjoyed a mutual avoidance relationship with other large predators.

So far, perhaps the most detailed evidence for hunting during Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon times comes from southern Africa. It suggests both further similarities and some important differences between Middle Stone Age people (contemporaries of the Neanderthals) and their Later Stone Age (Cro-Magnon) successors. One striking similarity concerns the formidable Cape buffalo, which both Middle and Later Stone Age peoples hunted. Neither seems to have been able to kill prime-age adult buffalo very often. Instead, like lions recently observed on the Serengeti Plain of East Africa, both concentrated on very young and old buffalo, whose relative weakness or exclusion from social groups makes them especially vulnerable to predation.

On the other hand, some important differences in hunting capabilities are suggested by differences in relative species abundance between Middle and Later Stone Age sites occupied under similar environmental circumstances. In particular, some especially dangerous species (wild pigs) tend to be better represented in Later Stone Age sites, while less dangerous species (especially eland) are relatively more common in Middle Stone Age ones. The explanation may be that Later Stone Age people possessed the technology to kill from a distance (perhaps with bow and arrow or spear thrower), while Middle Stone Age people did not. The available artifactual evidence can be used to support this, but not unequivocally.

More generally, differences in relative species abundance between Middle and Later Stone Age sites, in combination with the ages of animals when they were killed, suggest that Later Stone Age people cropped various species at a higher rate than their Middle Stone Age predecessors. This would indicate not only a more effective Later Stone Age hunting technology but also higher Later Stone Age population densities. The evidence for greater Later Stone Age hunting competence is importantly complemented by evidence that Later Stone Age people living in coastal environments actively fished and fowled, while Middle Stone Age people did not. Here accompanying artifactual evidence can be brought directly to bear. Only Later Stone Age artifact assemblages contain pieces that are reasonably interpreted as fishing or fowling gear.

Ultimately, detailed analyses of faunal samples from Eurasia may document similar differences between the Middle and Upper Paleolithic peoples there, helping to explain

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why Cro-Magnons appear to have been both more numerous and more widespread than their Neanderthal predecessors.

The combined biological, cultural, and economic evidence argues strongly that the Cro-Magnons were qualitatively advanced over their predecessors. Their clear cultural superiority was almost certainly made possible by biological change. Most important was an advance in intellectual capacity, which is probably related to, but not directly inferable from, the difference between classic Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon cranial forms. The biological change that ushered in the Cro-Magnons was in a real sense a revolutionary event. In the succeeding forty thousand years or so, there has been far more cultural evolution than in the preceding two million, yet there has been essentially no change in the form of the human organism.

The obvious cultural superiority of the Cro-Magnons at least in part explains why they were able to replace the Neanderthals, but it does not explain how the replacement took place. There are two major perspectives on this question. Adherents of the first believe that the transition from Neanderthal (or Neanderthal contemporary) to Cro-Magnon took place more or less simultaneously over much, if not most, of the occupied world. Adherents of the second argue that the transition was geographically restricted to a relatively small area. The newly evolved Cro-Magnons then spread rapidly, wiping out or genetically swamping the more archaic populations they encountered. A long-favored birthplace for the Cro-Magnons in the second view is the Near East, where the fossil record suggests there may have been an evolution from Neanderthal to Cro-Magnon during the same time interval that classic Neanderthals persisted unchanged in Europe. Recently, sub-Saharan Africa has emerged as a possible alternative and earlier Cro-Magnon birthplace. Finally, although the record in the Far East remains relatively murky, recent finds in China reinforce the obvious point that the Far East cannot be ignored in any full resolution of Cro-Magnon origins.

At most sites that preserve both Middle and Upper Paleolithic levels in Europe and Middle and Later Stone Age ones in Africa, there seems to have been a long period of abandonment between the latest Middle Paleolithic/Middle Stone Age occupation and the earliest Upper Paleolithic/Later Stone Age occupation. This complicates the problem of fixing the time(s) when one kind of culture actually replaced the other. It also raises the possibility that the Upper Paleolithic/Later Stone Age arose during an interval when human populations had been dramatically reduced as a result of environmental stress. There is still much to be learned about environmental change during the critical interval, but evidence is growing that it witnessed the onset of widespread and prolonged hyperaridity at lower and low-middle latitudes. It seems possible that this hyperaridity, or more properly, selection for the ability to cope with it, was a prominent factor in the emergence of the Cro-Magnons and their Upper Paleolithic/Later Stone Age cultures.

Unlike many other important events in human evolution, the appearance of anatomically modern people is recent enough for a detailed understanding of it to be within our grasp. Much of the new data that is needed is available at known sites or may even be available in already excavated materials, and the basic methods of data analysis have been developed. Imminent advances in radiocarbon dating technology promise to place all the Cro-Magnons and most of the Neanderthals within secure dating range. What is perhaps most important now is fresh recognition of the possibilities and a planned, cooperative, multinational effort to achieve them.

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Grandfather's Towers

(Hotel Bahamdoun, Lebanon, 1956)

GREGORY DJANIKIAN

He took me climbing where he knew the ground,
And sang me forth a folk and mountain song
To make my body kindred to the hill
And sloped like it and willful in its rise.
Up we rose, and up, loosed from the old
Hotel like truant children, my grandfather
Kicking the chalk-dirt with his climbing stick,
I on his heels and caught in his voice and sensing
How each step made me taller than the world
Till on the highest ridge the sky was ours.
And where I thought that nothing could go higher,
We built the three stone towers to my reach
Wedging the smallest rocks between the large
As true as we could make them, and hereafter,
From below, we'd point to where we'd been
And celebrate what joy could come of climbing
Where nothing was impossible, but huge.

And I'm no wiser than what I recall.
Whether the towers stood the night or fell,
Or whether my grandfather deep in his age
Himself grew stonier, and in a day
Tumbled too steeply to his darker self,

What does it matter here on this hillside,
Halfway between the crest and scree below,
When already the scent of wild oregano
Has flowered, and the cedars claim the air,
And one old man and child have stopped to watch
Three towers risen in a heave of weight
Above the terraces of the Bahamdoun
Where the red canopies flutter like wings all afternoon.

✪ GREGORY DJANIKIAN's poems have appeared in the *Nation*, *Hollins Critic*, and *Three Rivers Poetry Journal*.

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Between the Apple and the Stars

ALICE FULTON

Newton did not shew the cause of
the apple falling, but he shewed a
similitude between the apple and the stars.
Sir D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson

By now we know
the portents: an apple falls
in a plague year,
a star rises
in the East.
A premature birth,

Christmas 1642.
"Small enough
to fit in a quart mug,"
his mother said. So feeble
he needed a brace
to raise his head.

Once after studying the sun
it took three days
of darkness to revive
his eyes. Then for months
when he thought *sun*
its ghost rose
on his retina.

But more than laws,
he sought the divine.
One Stone
to undo the skimpy differences
in matter: bread to flesh,

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wine to blood, percolating wild
elixirs; even at the end
longing for "another shake
at the moon, another touch
at metals." Now gravity

lies passive as quicksand
under the jet.
But what of the Stone
with its "beravishing
smells, apparitions
of angels"? The scientist passes
a hand like a wand over
the wondrous button. The Stone

one day will render
all vibrancies
singular
as light. So apples
float from trees
and stars ripen
and die at ground
speed.

✪ ALICE FULTON's first book of poems, *Dance Script with Electric Ballerina*, will be published in the fall by the University of Pennsylvania Press.

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Books

Story

JAY NEUGEBOREN

In the spring of 1931, Whit Burnett and Martha Foley—American foreign correspondents working for the Consolidated Press in Vienna—mimeographed 167 copies of a magazine they called, simply, *Story*. The previous summer, while Burnett was traveling in the Balkans, a letter for him had come to Vienna from Edward J. O'Brien, asking permission to reprint Burnett's story, "Two Free Men," in *The Best American Short Stories of 1930*.

In her memoir, *The Story of Story Magazine*, Martha Foley tells of that moment, and of her elation:

> "Whit will be so well-known, he will be able to sell every story he writes!" I thought, jubilantly. . . . "Now Whit will only have to send his story to an editor. . . ." My thoughts raced on. But what editor? Where? Reality intruded like the dash of cold water I needed. Not to *transition*, where "Two Free Men," the story O'Brien would reprint, was published. Gene Jolas had just told us he would take no more stories. Not to Mencken, who had bought two of Whit's stories years ago. He, too, no longer wanted short stories. The other quality magazines in the States now had a puny limit of one or two stories an issue. Goddamn it! Short stories are an important part of literature. Why isn't there one good fiction magazine?
>
> Why, indeed! And then it came to me. Whit and I would start one.

Martha Foley and Whit Burnett first conceived of *Story* as a kind of sales catalogue. "We would call it a proof-book," Martha wrote, "because it would be proof of what splendid short stories authors were writing. Once editors and publishers had a chance to see them, they would be delighted to buy them and we could give the authors the money."

Story magazine was first published in Vienna in 1931, but it had its origins six years earlier, in Los Angeles in 1925, when Martha Foley was working as a feature writer for the *Los Angeles Daily News*. Like her managing editor, Douglas Turney, she, too, hoped to succeed as a writer of fiction. Together, during lulls in the city room, they would talk of their hopes, and they would bemoan the dwindling market for short stories. The previous year H. L. Mencken and George Jean Nathan had abandoned *Smart Set*, devoted primarily to fiction, in order to found the *American Mercury*, where they intended to emphasize factual writing and "the sociological essay." Mencken's decision to "depreciate" the short story, in favor of "the sociological article as *the* important form of literary interpretation of the American mores," was, according to Martha Foley, the major blow to the preeminence of the American short story. "The immediate great success of *The American Mercury*," she wrote, "made other magazines prefer articles to stories.

Quality magazines, like *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Scribner's*, *Forum*, and *Century*, which had been printing as many as eight short stories in a single issue, began to reduce the number sharply. Smaller-circulation literary magazines, *The Southern Literary Messenger*, *Southern Review*, and *Sewanee Review*, devoted more space to critical than to creative writing. Some of the better "slicks," the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's*, as well as some of the women's magazines, *Pictorial Review*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *McCall's*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, continued to print fiction, some of it distinguished, but not regularly. "Give me facts!" demanded Gradgrind, that "eminently practical

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man," in Dickens's *Hard Times*. "Give us facts!" echoed American magazine editors, pleasing the Babbitts and relegating fiction to the already obscure position of poetry.

Martha Foley tried to get Turney to start a serious fiction magazine with her, but he resisted, and she dropped the idea. When, six years later, Whit Burnett also resisted the idea, Martha became more persistent. She argued with Burnett, she wrote letters to writers and magazines and publishers, she made lists of possible titles (which Burnett disparaged), and she prepared to go ahead with the first issue by herself. Then Whit gave in. "Why," he said one day when they were hanging on to straps in a crowded Viennese streetcar, "don't we call it *Story*?"

The first issue of their bimonthly—"*Story*: The only magazine devoted solely to the Short Story"—was published in April 1931; it contained stories by Kay Boyle, Oliver Gossman, Georg Balint, Romer Wilson, Ernst Decsey, and by Whit Burnett and Martha Foley. "The only purpose of *Story*," its first page announced, "is to present, regularly, from one place, a number of Short Stories of exceptional merit. It has no theories, and is part of no movement. It presents short narratives of significance by no matter whom and coming from no matter where."

Although *Story* magazine continued, in various forms, to be published for the next thirty-three years, the time from 1931 to 1941, when Martha Foley coedited it with Whit Burnett, was its great period. Those years were called, by Edward J. O'Brien (founder and editor, for its first twenty-six years, of the Best Short Stories series), "the *Story* decade." For most of those years—in Vienna, on Majorca, and then, from 1933 on, in New York—*Story* was published monthly, ran to more than one hundred pages, and included eight to ten stories per issue. During that decade the magazine also ran other regular features—informal essays ("Notes" and "End Pages" by the editors), best-seller lists, letters (often lengthy story-by-story critiques by readers of previous issues), book review excerpts, and literary essays by writers such as Thomas Mann, George Bernard Shaw, Van Wyck Brooks, and Sherwood Anderson. It also came to print poems, adaptations of plays, photo-essays, film criticism, and—all this without reducing the number of stories—over forty novellas. It ran a readers' literary service, an annual college short story contest, produced a weekly radio program, sponsored a Works Projects Administration story contest (which discovered Richard Wright), and founded and operated The Story Press, a publishing company whose first book was Ignazio Silone's *Bread and Wine*. *Story*'s circulation, in the mid-thirties, was slightly more than twenty thousand.

During these years *Story* discovered and published for the very first time an extraordinary number of American writers, among them Norman Mailer, Erskine Caldwell, William Saroyan, Peter De Vries, J. D. Salinger, John Cheever, Richard Wright, James T. Farrell, Tennessee Williams, Emily Hahn, Frederic Prokosch, Jesse Stuart, Tess Slesinger, James Ramsey Ullman, Dorothy McCleary, Jerome Weidmann, Carson McCullers, Elizabeth Janeway, Ludwig Bemelmans, and Nelson Algren. In issue after issue, the editors would point to their discoveries, to the fact that, at *Story*, unknown writers were given the same reading that established writers were given; but they were proud, too, that during these years *Story* also published—for fees of twenty-five dollars—the stories of established authors (who were earning thousands per story from the slicks) and that these authors were usually "represented by stories not identified with the type of work on which [they] have made their reputations" (for example, Faulkner's "Lo!").

During the years from 1931 to 1941, *Story* published, in addition to work by its "discoveries," fiction by William Faulkner, Kay Boyle, William Carlos Williams, Alvah Bessie, Conrad Aiken, Gertrude Stein, Manuel Komroff, Howard Fast, Katherine Anne Porter, Sherwood Anderson, Meyer Levin, Budd Schulberg, Albert Maltz, Daniel Fuchs, Elliott Arnold, Louis L'Amour, Warren Beck, Wallace Stegner, W. K. Wimsatt, Jr., Irwin Shaw, Aldous Huxley, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Carleton Coons, Hal Borland, Allan Seager, Zora Neale Hurston, Nancy Wilson Ross, William E. Wilson, Helen Hull, Edita Morris, Mari Sandoz, and hundreds of others whose work was, in varying degrees, already known or beginning to be known. *Story* also published fiction by writers from abroad. It was the first magazine in America to publish

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the work of Robert Musil, Ignazio Silone, Peter Neagoe, Graham Greene, Malcolm Lowry, V. G. Calderon, H. E. Bates, Alfred H. Mendes, Mikhail Zoshchenko, and Eric Knight. It also published stories (often, for non-English authors, in their first English translations) by Anton Chekhov, Luigi Pirandello, Ivan Bunin, Stoyan Christowe, Isaac Bein, Abraham Raisin, Flann O'Brien, Seán O'Faoláin, Liam O'Flaherty, Morley Callaghan, A. Averchenko, Ralph Bates, A. I. Kuprin, Synnove Larsen Baasch, Romer Wilson, A. E. Coppard, Eric Jens Petersen, Oliver Gossman, and Padraic Fallon.

Many of the magazines that published fiction in the thirties (*Scribner's*, the *American Mercury*, *Collier's*, *Vanity Fair*, the *Hound and the Horn*, and others) have since vanished, and though there are now hundreds of quarterlies (most with very small circulation, and most sponsored by universities) that publish stories of literary excellence, there are, in 1983, less than a handful of magazines—and we can name them: the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Esquire*, *Harper's*, and *The New Yorker*—that both have a wide circulation and regularly publish what has, alas, come, in the literary marketplace, to be called serious fiction. Yet even *Harper's* and *Esquire* have recently published issues containing no fiction. (During the thirties, the *Saturday Evening Post*, then a weekly with a circulation of over two million, was publishing six stories in an issue, and more literary magazines, such as *Harper's*, the *Atlantic*, *The New Yorker*, and *Scribner's*, were often publishing four stories an issue, and sometimes a short novel.)

To list the writers *Story* discovered, then, and to know the history of *Story* in the thirties, is to remind ourselves of how different times were for the short story in America. It was a time when an editor could still hope that a magazine "devoted solely to the short story" could join high culture to a wide audience. (In recent times only magazines of general interest—Norman Podhoretz's *Commentary* or Ted Solotaroff's now-defunct *American Review*—have had such aspirations. And the amount of fiction there—*Commentary* publishes fiction every second or third issue—is exceeded, always, by the amount of nonfiction.) It was a time when, to judge from circulation figures (the *Saturday Evening Post*'s circulation far exceeded that of either *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Life*, or *Look*), readers turned to fiction—and not to the sociological article or the news story—to find out about the life that lay beyond their homes.

It was a time, I would suggest, when serious fiction was still thought of as being a potentially and essentially popular medium—a time when editors such as Martha Foley and Whit Burnett could conceive of themselves as having the mission to bring good fiction to a large audience. And this very sense of mission—the attempt to get the best possible stories to the widest possible audience—accounts to some degree for the great unevenness, the strange mixture of the ordinary and the extraordinary, of highbrow and lowbrow fiction that filled *Story*'s pages during these years: daring and original work by writers such as Faulkner, Fuchs, Lowry, Alan Marshall, and Saroyan alongside conventional and predictable stories by writers such as Eric Knight, Mary O'Hara, Louis L'Amour, and Norah Lofts.

Not all the stories, even by the newly discovered writers, were good or innovative or even literary. Many, especially turgid proletarian stories of the Depression, now seem awkward and dated. To read through these stories, and to read through the notes about them and about their authors, is to remind oneself not only of the vagaries of literary styles and taste, but also of the transience of literary reputation. Many authors whose names and works were considered well known (Kressman Taylor, Rachel Crothers, Julia Davis, Eric Knight, Robert Ayre, A. I. Bezzerides) now seem unfamiliar. Writers who, often, *Story* felt were among its great discoveries, writers who went on to have successful careers and to publish several books—Villa Stiles, Constance Bestor, Lewis Carliner, Mary Medearis, I. J. Kapstein —are now, for the most part, quite forgotten.

In Vienna in 1931, Whit Burnett and Martha Foley discovered, everything was expensive, but printing was cheap. What the *American Mercury* paid Martha Foley for a single article—$150—was sufficient to pay for the printing of the next two issues of *Story*, and, to their delight, in hand-set type and on rag paper. Before the second issue went to press, the magazine received crucial encouragement; Edward J. O'Brien wrote again, asking for permission to reprint four stories from *Story*'s very first issue—the most, until then,

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ever chosen from a single magazine in an entire year.

The number of unsolicited manuscripts multiplied rapidly. The editors received seventy to eighty stories a day and one hundred fifty on Mondays. And they read them all. "We ask *Story* contributors to be patient," they would write in 1934, when they were six thousand manuscripts behind and were receiving one hundred fifty a day and three hundred fifty on Mondays. "Every manuscript is read by the editors themselves. There is no large staff of readers. . . . The editors really feel for the authors, and particularly for the newer ones, and *Story* has attempted to avoid any machine-like and stereotyped consideration of what is offered here." (Note, by contrast, a 1978 issue of *Fiction* magazine—which contains work by sixteen authors; is supported by one university and three foundations; has a staff of twenty-two assorted senior, managing, contributing, and associate editors; and which has returned stories it solicited with form rejections.) Martha Foley and Whit Burnett never lost their sense of what it was like to be a hopeful, struggling, and vulnerable writer.

Except to correct misspellings, the editors of *Story* made no changes and asked for no revisions. They accepted or rejected the stories and sent those they liked to the printer. (This, too, helps to account for the unevenness of stories and of prose.) In the summer of 1931, after the first issue of *Story* appeared, Martha Foley and Whit Burnett married. Later that year, shortly before they left Vienna for Majorca, their son David was born.

In 1932, when the editors were down to their last fifty dollars, they wrote from Majorca to friends in New York, hoping to find an American publisher who would back their magazine. Manuel Komroff replied that Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer of Random House were interested, and that Whit and Martha should come to New York at once. They arrived in America in early 1933, and within days *Story*'s future was decided. It would have its offices at Random House (which was then largely a reprint house and saw *Story* as a good scouting arrangement by which to bring authors to them—they got Saroyan that way). Donald Klopfer would be president, Bennett Cerf, secretary-treasurer, and Harry Scherman (founder and president of the Book-of-the-Month Club), vice-president. Morris Ernst would be the magazine's attorney. Whit and Martha would be the editors, at salaries of thirty-five dollars a week.

The first American issue of *Story* (April 1933) was published on the day before the banks closed. In an announcement to readers ("With this issue *Story* comes to America"), the editors sketched in *Story*'s two-year history—by this time it had published work by Caldwell, Farrell, William Carlos Williams, Musil, William March, Tess Slesinger, among others, and had had dozens of its stories anthologized—and noted that, despite the fact that O'Brien had stated that "*Story* is now the most distinguished short story magazine in the world," at no time "did its circulation ever exceed six hundred copies." The editors, they concluded, "have no wild ambitions for *Story;* they have no illusions that it will suddenly produce a new crop of Conrads or Chekhovs. But they believe deeply that it may easily open the pathway to one or two such, and that it is of infinite importance that a pathway be kept open. Little known as the magazine has been, they have already seen that the stories submitted to them—for honor, apparently, and little more—are more original and in general far superior to the run of those which editors of magazines of large circulation, with fixed notions about their readers, apparently seem to feel they should accept."

Harry Scherman sent out an elaborate test mailing for the magazine to a list of writers, telling them about the magazine and inviting subscriptions. The response was the greatest he ever received. Practically all the authors replied that they would be delighted to subscribe—would *Story* please deduct the price of a subscription from what they were paid for their manuscripts, which they were sending.

Many authors—Algren, Caldwell, Cheever, Tennessee Williams, Cornell Woolrich, Malcolm Lowry—brought their manuscripts to the office by hand. The most heartbreaking, according to Martha Foley, was Lowry, who was then separated from his wife, dismally lonely, and who was having his stories, and a novel, rejected everywhere. "For weeks he visited my office every day," Foley wrote, "sat around for a while, looked at books and magazines I had lying about, and disconsolately departed. Once he disappeared. When he returned he told me he had been placed for observation in Bellevue."

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This first two American issues included the first published stories of Nelson Algren, Frederick Scribner, John S. McNamarra, Bernadine Kielty, Linda Henly, Alan Marshall ("Death and Transfiguration," a remarkable story about rural New Hampshire—set in Seabrook—that would elicit as much praise as any story the magazine would ever publish), and the first story published in America by Lowry. They also included stories by Caldwell, Boyle, Komroff, Conrad Aiken ("Impulse"), H. E. Bates, Zora Neale Hurston, Ted Pratt, Faulkner, A. E. Coppard, and Zoshchenko.

By its third American issue (August 1933), *Story* was doing so well that it announced its "expansion from a magazine costing fifty cents an issue and appearing every two months to a magazine which hereafter will cost half that amount and appear every month." ("*Story* was brought to America as an experiment in the presentation of writing which generally was being ignored by the commercial magazines of this country although hailed critically when this same writing appeared in books. . . . With this issue's radical change in both price and frequency of appearance, the editors hope to bring *Story* to an even larger reading public.")

For the next issue, Bernadine Kielty, the wife of Harry Scherman, joined the magazine as an associate editor (she would remain for eight years), and George Cronyn, a short story writer and biographer, became business manager. The issue included stories by Marquis W. Childs, A. Averchenko, Alvah Bessie, John Peale Bishop, Whit Burnett, and Gertrude Stein ("A native of Pennsylvania, she prefers Paris, where for many years her salons in the rue de Fleurus have been famous and often deadly").

In this issue Martha and Whit introduced the first of many columns of "Notes"—informal (and often cloyingly cute) remarks about writers and their work, especially about writers whose work was appearing in *Story*. These notes and anecdotes—about the rise of fascism, about the success of *Story*'s authors, and about their personal lives (Kay Boyle and Laurence Vail have "left their Riviera place at *Ville-Franche* and have gone to live in Vienna")—became standard fare for the rest of the decade, and as the magazine succeeded and its enterprises expanded (they announced their first college short story contest in the next issue, and published their first anthology, *A Story Anthology, 1931–33*, at the end of the year), its tone became at the same time, both more intimate and more expansive.

They talked to their readers at length, for example, of their pride in having solicited stories from Ivan Bunin when he was unpublished and forgotten. When he became the first Russian Nobel Prize winner, *Story* had thirteen of his manuscripts, and they finally chose, translated, and published three. They even quoted, at excruciating length, from rejected manuscripts in order to assure readers and writers, as they frequently did, of the earnestness of their own labors.

In the final three issues of 1933, *Story* published work by, among others, Bunin, Faulkner, Fuchs, Isaac Bein, Sherwood Anderson, Eugene Jolas, and, in February 1934, the first published story by a young Armenian writer who would within the next few years become their "star discovery." The writer was William Saroyan, and the story, which had arrived single-spaced on yellow paper (perhaps the most overtly experimental story *Story* would ever publish—their preference was for the realistic and traditional; they never published fiction that, in Flannery O'Connor's words, looked "funny on the page"), was "The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze."

In March 1934, *Story* marked its first anniversary in America with much self-congratulation. "Hardly any" of the seventy-four stories published in the magazine during the preceding year, the editors stated, "would otherwise have seen print . . . had they not been accepted by *Story*." After listing names of new and established writers, they went on to talk about what they saw as a virtual renaissance in the American short story, a renaissance for which they claimed a share of the credit. They wrote of the increasing number of volumes of stories; they wrote of the increased sales of these volumes; they noted that newspapers had begun to print stories; and they were proud that in England two new magazines had appeared, *Lovat Dickson's Magazine* and *New Stories*, both openly modeled on *Story*'s "notable success."

The next few years were *Story*'s most glorious ones. By early 1935 its paid circulation had passed the 21,000 mark; in the same year the *New Republic*'s circulation was 25,000;

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the *American Mercury*, 31,000; *New Masses*, 32,000; *Scribner's*, 44,000; *Harper's*, 103,000; and *The New Yorker*, 121,000. They had published their second anthology of stories (*Story in America*). They had completed their first college story contest (won by nineteen-year-old James Laughlin, later the founder and publisher of New Directions Books); and they had launched the first competition "for the Best Novel written by an Author who has had a story published in the magazine *Story*." The $1000-prize contest was cosponsored by Doubleday, Doran & Company.

In mid-1935 *Story* moved to new and larger quarters at 432 Fourth Avenue. The general-store atmosphere still prevailed ("Our new quarters have a homey air. We are only fourteen floors above Michel's Tavern, at 29th and Fourth. Fourth Avenue is the heart of the America publishing industry. Michel's is the stomach"), but the magazine and the magazine's enterprises continued expanding rapidly. The columns of "End Pages," written, usually, by Whit Burnett, became, in early 1936, a regular and lengthier feature; they ranged over a variety of subjects: Martha's attempts, in Paris, to learn to ride a bike; Whit's meetings with famous writers; anecdotes about David's eighteen imaginary playmates, etc.

In August 1936, with the establishment of The *Story* Service Bureau, the editors, in a wonderfully American blend of idealism, optimism, missionary zeal, and capitalist enterprise, seemed ready to turn the magazine into an industry. The *Story* Service Bureau provided six primary services to *Story* Associates: (1) The *Story* Press-to-Reader Service (for book orders); (2) The *Story* Bureau Information Service (for advice on the selection of book purchases); (3) The *Story* Bureau Study Service (for study groups, classes, and short story clubs); (4) The *Story* Bureau School Service (advice on colleges offering the best courses in modern literature); (5) The *Story* Bureau Reading Service (ten best short stories of the month, etc.); and (6) The *Story* Bureau 'Best-Seller' Service (national best-sellers, most popular books among *Story* readers). "*Story* Associates," the announcement concluded, "will become a powerful factor in assisting people to find the best contemporary literature. *Story* was founded to present good stories. *Story* now takes the next logical step forward in assisting the reading public to find and to buy the best in modern writing."

In October 1936 *Story* announced that Kurt Simon, an exile from nazism and former publisher of the *Frankfurter-Zeitung*, had become *Story*'s president. The magazine, no longer borrowing office space from Random House, was "on its own independent feet, concentrating solely on its own publishing." In the November issue it inaugurated several new features "with a view to making [*Story*] the most definitive magazine of its kind on the short story and contemporary writing in English."

The new features, which would run regularly until the end of the decade, were (1) essays "on writing and writers . . . from the outstanding short story writers of the world"; (2) regular columns of letters; (3) best-seller lists; (4) "Recommended Reading"; and (5) "Plus & Minus: A monthly survey of the reviews for and against the most significant books of the month." These innovations thrived. During the midthirties *Story* published essays by, among others, Thomas Mann ("Measure and Value"), Sherwood Anderson ("Why Men Write"), George Bernard Shaw ("Fascism"), Van Wyck Brooks, Eugene Jolas, James Laughlin, Dorothy Thompson, and semi-scholarly articles by less familiar names (for example, "Chekhov's Middle Years," by Nina A. Toumanova).

And then in April 1936—their fifth anniversary issue—Whit and Martha announced the establishment of The Story Press, which, "in association with Harper & Brothers, expects to publish in America each year a limited number of books of high distinction." Whit and Martha would edit the books. "Nothing," they said, "will influence the acceptance of a manuscript but its own vitality, freshness, and literary merit." The Press's first book, published a year later, was Ignazio Silone's *Bread and Wine*. Its second book was *Song on Your Bugles* by Eric Knight, a frequent contributor to *Story* (a writer remembered today, if at all, for *Lassie Come Home*, but a writer considered at the time, to judge from the pages of *Story*, to be as distinguished as Silone). Its third book, a collection of four long stories, and the work of a *Story* discovery, was *Uncle Tom's Children* by Richard Wright.

Martha Foley and Whit Burnett seemed, in the midthirties, to be succeeding in their

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attempt to bring quality fiction to a wide audience. *Story*'s circulation stayed steady at around 21,000; its books sold well (*Bread and Wine* went quickly to more than 100,000 copies); some of *Story*'s discoveries (Saroyan, Caldwell, Farrell) were already reaching large audiences with their books while continuing to publish—for twenty-five dollars a story—in *Story*, and others were finding publishers. Whit and Martha noted in one column that six recent contributors had, largely because of their appearance in *Story*, sold first novels.

At the end of 1936, *Story* also instituted a regular review column, "Firsts," by Horace Gregory, on the "new writers of today and their first books." It emphasized, too, its new commitment to publishing longer stories, for which it used—for the first time in English, according to Martha Foley—the word *novella* (novelette, she said, sounded too demeaning—like "farmerette" or "flannelette").

The new features continued, for the most part, to appear regularly in the magazine for the rest of the decade, but from 1937 until Martha's leave-taking in 1941, the magazine initiated only a few other innovations, and most of them (photo-essays, play adaptations, and poetry, for example) were quickly discontinued. The magazine's college story contest continued through these years, as did The Story Press. But during these years notice of the *Story* Service Bureau disappeared from the magazine's pages; the magazine returned (without explanation) to bimonthly publication in July 1938; there were—especially in 1938 and 1939—fewer essays by Whit and Martha until, in 1940, there were none at all. And then the magazine's circulation began to decline—to 17,000 in 1938 and 1939, and to 8,000 in 1940 and 1941.

In 1940 the magazine announced what was its only major new addition during these years—"Tonight's Best Story," a radio program broadcast on Tuesday evenings at 9:30 over New York station WHN. Rex Stout appeared in the opening show ("The Night Reveals," by Cornell Woolrich); a few programs later Erskine Caldwell appeared to speak about Richard Wright's "Fire and Cloud." Others whose stories were adapted were Irwin Shaw, Kressman Taylor, Eric Knight, Saroyan, Lord Dunsany, Seán O'Faoláin, Sherwood Anderson, and Martha Foley.

Though both the magazine's circulation and its nonfictional departures declined during these years, the dedication to quality fiction by both new and established writers did not. *Story* printed the first published stories of some of its most noteworthy finds: Richard Wright, twenty-one-year-old J. D. Salinger ("He is particularly interested in playwriting"), Mary O'Hara, and Tennessee Williams.

The second issue of 1941—Martha Foley's last year at *Story*—contained the first published stories by two new writers, James Ramsey Ullman ("Still Life") and Hallie Southgate Abbett ("Eighteenth Summer"), one of the runners-up in *Story*'s contest conducted among budding writers of the Junior League." The latter is worth mentioning, for in 1942 Hallie Abbett would become the second Mrs. Whit Burnett, and she would, from that year on, edit the magazine with her husband. (Her name first appears on the title page, as associate editor, in January 1944.)

The May–June issue of 1941 was the magazine's tenth anniversary issue, and *Story* observed the occasion by reprinting "some of the most significant stories which have appeared in [its] pages since 1931." The editors chose a dozen out of nearly one thousand stories *Story* had published during the previous decade, selecting them, they wrote, "not only for their literary quality but because in addition to being good stories they seem in one way or another, to illuminate the years in which they were published." The stories, they believed, were "almost a literary history of their time."

There remained two more issues of *Story* for which Martha Foley served as editor. The first, in July–August, contained the first story published in America by Flann O'Brien ("Flann O'Brien is a discovery of William Saroyan's, but further than that, at this moment, we know nothing except that he is not William Saroyan"), and the second, and last, in September–October, was "a departure from the magazine's ten-year policy of exclusive devotion to the creative short story." It was an issue dedicated to Sherwood Anderson, "the greatest contemporary short story writer." In addition to selections from Anderson's work, it contained contributions from Steiglitz, Dreiser, Stein, Wolfe, Henry Miller, Saroyan, Kenneth Patchen, Ben Hecht, and others. "In the field of the short story," the editors wrote,

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"Sherwood Anderson set out on new paths at a time when the American short story seemed doomed to a formula-ridden, conventionalized, mechanized and commercialized concept. When *Winesburg, Ohio* appeared in 1919 it was intensely influential on writers who had either lost heart or had not yet found their way." (How times change! In a recent graduate writing class of mine, not one student had ever read *Winesburg, Ohio*.)

And then, on page 1 of the November–December 1941 issue, appeared the following announcement, signed by Whit Burnett and Kurt Simon:

TO OUR READERS

With this issue, the name of Martha Foley disappears from the editorial title page of *Story*. Miss Foley is on a leave of absence in order that she may edit the Edward J. O'Brien Memorial Anthology, *The Best Short Stories*.

They wrote of their desire to help continue O'Brien's "great and pioneering tradition" by relinquishing Martha Foley. But the brief twenty-one-line announcement seemed, given all that had passed, strangely impersonal, oddly cold and dry. "After ten years of daily association," it concluded, "it would be impossible in a few brief words here to express our gratitude for and appreciation of Miss Foley's work on *Story*. We greatly regret her loss to the magazine and its readers, but we join with them in wishing her the very best in her new undertaking."

The *Story* decade was over.

In the same issue in which Martha Foley's departure was announced, *Story* printed the winner of its eighth college contest, "Greatest Thing in the World." It was written by an eighteen-year-old Harvard student, Norman K. Mailer. On how he had felt about appearing in *Story*, Mailer later wrote that "probably nothing has happened in the years I've been writing which changed my life as much. The far-away, all-powerful and fabulous world of New York publishing—which, of course, I saw through Thomas Wolfe's eyes—had said 'yes' to me."

Story continued to give such encouragement, intermittently, until 1964 and numbered among its discoveries, after Martha's departure, Truman Capote, John Knowles, and Joseph Heller. Whit Burnett and Hallie Abbett edited it as a bimonthly until the summer of 1948 when it became, briefly, a quarterly. It suspended publication from 1948 until 1951, when it reappeared for a while in book form every six months, still under Whit Burnett and Hallie Abbett's editorship. It ceased publication again through most of the fifties and reappeared in 1960, under the partial sponsorship of the University of Missouri and with a greatly expanded editorial board. "The editors," Burnett wrote, "believe that there is even more demand now for a magazine of distinguished and readable short stories than there was when *Story* first began nearly thirty years ago. . . . *Story* enters the sixties confident there are many new writers of power and talent yet to be heard from. And to these as well as to all skilled and meaningful writers of our day, it opens its pages."

The belief and hope—and tone—remained the same, but the times were different. Despite partial sponsorship by the University of Cincinnati, and, for its college contest, by the Reader's Digest Foundation, *Story* suspended publication again—for good—three and a half years (and twelve issues) later, in early 1964.

Story's extraordinary gift for discovery—for publishing those writers and those stories that were being rejected by all other magazines—seems to me, from this distance, its most valuable contribution, its most precious gift. It cared about the short story and about the writers of short stories—especially new writers—and it gave hundreds of them what was essential: some confirmation from the world that what they were doing mattered. "Publication of early work is what a writer needs most of all," Erskine Caldwell wrote recently, echoing the sentiments of many of *Story*'s contributors. "By putting me into print when the commercial magazines and book publishers took no notice of what I was trying to do—Whit and Martha gave me the confidence to keep going in my own way, instead of trying to 'write what editors want.' "

Story's openness to new writers and to different kinds of fiction seems, today, especially remarkable. "The editors have refrained from any narrow definition of the short story," it declared in 1935, "from saying, other than by the implication of the published examples, what a short story is or might be. They have no preconceived notions of its limits or its possibilities: they feel it can, perhaps, be

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better than we know." *Story* was to be, always, "a magazine edited with scant respect for the formulas and taboos created in this century by the magazines of great circulation in their effort to publish a type of fiction that could never offend anyone—much." Thus, in *Story*, one might find a story that could just as easily have appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, followed by a story that might have appeared in *transition*.

Story was impressive, too, not only for its openness to new writers and new fiction, but for its success. It published eight to ten stories a month, year after year, for an audience greatly larger than that of any literary quarterly, and it thereby helped give new life to the American short story at a time when the genre seemed in decline. It retained a wonderfully naive optimism and excitement about fiction, and this—combined with the huckstering—enabled it to reach a widely diverse audience with stories of widely divergent quality. It still hoped, as no literary magazine does today, to reach the *general* public.

But reading through *Story*, and especially through the midthirties issues, I was impressed with something else, with something simpler: with how much more important, to publishers and to the public, fiction then seemed. There were, for example, dozens of advertisements in *Story* from publishers announcing large cash prizes for first novels. In addition to the *Story*-Doubleday prize, and Story Press books, the Book-of-the-Month Club offered four $2,500 awards a year to "unrecognized" authors; the *Atlantic* offered a $10,000 prize for a first novel; the WPA, in association with *Story*, offered a $500 fiction prize; and other publishers, including Knopf, Houghton Mifflin, Dodd Mead, Little Brown, Scribner's, and Harper's, also offered large sums, in prizes and fellowships, in their quest for fiction by new writers.

In 1983 some of these publishers will no longer consider unsolicited manuscripts; none of them offer annual prizes for new novels; and while things are grim for the new writer (in recent years only about one hundred first novels a year are published by all trade publishers combined), the plight of the established novelist seems even more dismal. As several editors at major New York publishers have recently admitted to me, for the established writer of quality fiction it has, invariably, become an either / or situation: *either* a new novel by a writer whose previous books have not been commercially successful is a Breakthrough Novel ("another *Garp!*")—*or* it will be rejected. "In the old days," one editor said to me, "one would support the good writers on one's list with the best-selling writers. But those days are gone. Now that the conglomerates have taken over, it's every book for itself—with cost-accounting / bottom-line thinking ruling all, and the writer's career be damned." Or consider the president and publisher of one of America's most prestigious publishing companies—a man of excellent literary taste—saying to me, "I've come to the conclusion that no novel today should be more than 270 pages long."

Story could thrive in the thirties not only because of the particular talents of its editors, but because it was a time when publishers and readers still—despite Mencken and despite the despair that first made Martha Foley want to start *Story*—went to fiction for the news of how they lived. The sociological essay and the news magazine had not yet, as circulation figures and tables of contents indicate, replaced the story as the heart of large-circulation magazines. This was so, I would suggest—and it begins to tell us why a magazine such as *Story* could not thrive today—largely because writers (and publishers) still saw good fiction as being potentially saleable, on a regular basis, to a large and general audience.

In 1983, when only four magazines of large circulation regularly publish serious fiction (with, at most, two stories an issue, and sometimes none), and when most literary quarterlies are sponsored by universities and have neither the desire nor the hope of reaching anything that could remotely be called the general public, the division between popular and serious fiction seems all too final. Popular (inferior) fiction is published in large-circulation magazines (those that are left); serious (superior) fiction is published in small-circulation magazines. The university and the foundation—and not the reader—is, invariably, the patron. I know of no editor or writer who believes that a magazine "devoted solely to the short story" could today reach an audience such as *Story*'s. And, as the small markets for serious fiction decline further (with the death of even a single magazine such as

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American Review), the tendency seems less and less reversible.

My own sense is that, during the last half century, the decline of fiction—of the reading of fiction—is directly related to the decline in privacy and in our belief in privacy, and also to the decline in our belief in the imagination as a trustworthy source of pleasure and information. Other media—most notably, television and films—increasingly compel the attention and minds of most Americans. We are familiar with most of the ordinary data—the ways in which children no longer read fairy tales, the numbers of hours they watch TV, etc. For all kinds of reasons, people seem to have a harder and harder time doing what novel and story reading require—being alone with the written word, in the privacy of one's mind and imagination. Reading is neither a public nor a group experience. Reading a long and wonderful novel seems, sometimes, to be one of the last totally private (and "useless") experiences left to us in an age when the refusal to share one's life and feelings is often regarded as sinful. To be alone with a novel or story that requires attention, reflection, and a sensibility that has itself been previously tuned and refined by the reading of good fiction—this seems, more and more, an unusual, if not alien, experience.

The history of *Story* magazine raises questions, then, about the history and fate of fiction in our time. My own preferences, as a writer and reader of stories and novels, clearly affect my sense of *Story*'s significance. Yet I cannot, no matter how much I might wish it weren't so, conceive of a magazine such as *Story*—bringing good fiction, and lots of it, to a wide and general audience—existing today.

A Past Recaptured

KATE GREENAWAY: A BIOGRAPHY. *By Rodney Engen. Schocken. $29.95.*

Reviewed by SONYA RUDIKOFF

Once there was a time when you could take a train from London and in half an hour be out in the country, into roads and villages of immemorial antiquity. The past was all around, within reach, easily recoverable, used, recaptured. Just beyond the suburban districts, there was the life of villages and cottages and old-timey people, which John Ruskin thought could be renewed, which George Eliot could still tap, which William Morris hoped to restore—that life of old crafts and time-ripened knowledge, free from the harsh depredations of the dark Satanic mills. When Leslie Stephen and Pollock and Maitland went out for their Sunday tramps, when Kate Greenaway went out to paint little villages in Surrey, it was industrialization they were fleeing and could still successfully flee. And there were places they knew where they could find that old life and its landscape. As in India today, or Turkey, or in much of Western Europe until recently, the life of past centuries could still be found at a short distance from major cities. It is not, of course, the same in America: there has never been that old life of past centuries, communal life lived in the same place where the landscape has been humanized over successive generations going back into recorded history. Half an hour out of some American places leads either to more of the same or, alternatively, to a primitive landscape out of history altogether.

Of course, it was not really that old life—by definition irrecoverable and past—but it looked and felt enough like it, and could be seen to be enough like it to serve the imagination. The work of Kate Greenaway, Randolph Caldecott, Walter Crane, Beatrix Potter, and their successors would be inconceivable without that world in which childhood and history were interwoven in such intricate ways and were available for literature and thought. There, legends, precepts, moral instruction, and pleasure were inextricably united in that web of ancient images, in which subversive delight, desire, emulation, violent expression, and subtle identification could all be accommodated without explicit emphasis or isolated intention. When children's books became a large new genre in the nineteenth century, the vocabulary and imagery of eighteenth-century children's tracts and cautionary tales were already in existence as precedent and tradition. Those early books were called *The Path of Learning Strewed With Roses, The Rational Exhibition for Children, The Parlour Teacher, The Affectionate Parent's Gift*

SONYA RUDIKOFF is currently working on a study of Virginia Woolf and language.

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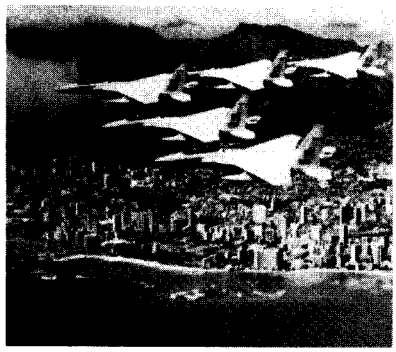
Air Power in the Nuclear Age

M. J. Armitage and R. A. Mason



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and The Good Child's Reward, The Good Child's Delight, Early Seeds to Produce Spring Flowers. The diamond-paned windows opening out of thatched cottages, the old woman with her conical hat, the clever dog, the greedy boy, the dunce, the young orphan, the circumspect cat, the little beggar girl—all were familiar and ready to be invested with new feeling to become the figures of the new genre.

Now, imagine the children's room of a modern local library, with its very interesting exhibits: say, a display of locks and doorknobs, with every kind of latch or lock or catch or clasp or brace, all to be played with on a low table, under the encouraging eye of the children's librarian. This person, a young woman in blue jeans and turtleneck and sandals, knowledgeable and highly trained, doesn't insist on silence, doesn't reprimand, doesn't have anything hidden away in a locked closet. She puts up pictures of Kennedy and Einstein, Martin Luther King, Jr., and E.T., puts birds' nests and Kleenex on the low tables, helps even the smallest readers to take out as many books as they can carry. She welcomes book reviews from the children, she cheerfully replaces lost library cards without even a shadow crossing her bright smile. On the walls, posters command, "READ!" and the room is as crowded as a store, the shelves overflowing. It is clearly not the world in which children's literature came into being, the world of "Ellen, or the Naughty Girl Reclaimed," a great favorite of Queen Victoria, or "Hogarth Moralized," "The Curious Girl Cured," or "Frederick, or the Effects of Disobedience," or even the world of the recent past, when children's librarians were like the nuns of a civic order, vestal attendants, anointed guardians cherishing the keys to a sacred world of images.

Of course, the world of images is no longer sacred; it has been domesticated, demystified, even deconstructed. And all children can produce images at will on a little screen. They need no longer even read to expand their repertoire of images. Television, newspapers, magazines, modern packaging, the designs of stores and their interiors, of commercial buildings, of window displays, of schools, the advanced design of everyday objects, the world of toys and objects produced for pleasure and amusement—all around us the myriad images and the semiotics of everyday life have profoundly changed modern visual experience, especially the visual experience and development of children. Whether through systematic transformation by mechanical processes or through the casual absorption of ordinary life, no child remains unsophisticated today, no eye is naked or innocent.

Where is the penny world bought to eat behind a screen, asked the poet, where are the eagles and the trumpets? Where, indeed, if not encapsulated and preserved in the world hypothesized by the children's books of the past? The modern children's book is much more sensible and realistic than its ancestors, with practical solutions and ordinary situations, its benign fantasies of a less monitory kind, or its fantasies challenged by the mass creation and distribution of images for which children now constitute so large an audience. Even *The Little Engine That Could* and *Curious George,* who once displaced Johnny Crow and Mrs. Tittlemouse and the dish that ran away with the spoon, have been threatened by E.T., who in turn will be replaced by other images manufactured for the child public.

The inventions of Potter, Caldecott, and Greenaway are now classics, but once they were the new books. They were widely imitated; they were taken up by publishers alert to the new profitable possibilities in the spread of literacy, the growth of a middle class bent on reading and having its children read, and the lowered infant mortality rate, which meant more young readers. The children's books of the middle and later nineteenth century would not have been possible without new processes of printing and color reproduction, which made illustration of the texts a desirable addition to their attractions, and soon it became the chief attraction. Adapting new ideas about children in well-illustrated books provided a fresh opportunity to enchant and entertain; stories no longer had to serve as mere adjuncts to moral instruction. Technology was available for a new genre, and artists were there to make it an art.

When Kate Greenaway, as a young woman in her twenties, finished her lengthy course at the South Kensington Female School of Art (set up in 1852), supplementing her studies at the newer Slade School (opened only in 1871), she was well prepared in design and skilled in the use of watercolor, tempera, and

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oil, in drawing and plaster work, and in other ornamental techniques, and she was ready to work as an artisan or designer in the new industries then developing in England. Her father was an engraver and illustrator for *Punch* and the *Illustrated London News*, an aunt was a bookbinder, and another favorite aunt was a wood engraver. Kate Greenaway had executed some commissions while still a student, had exhibited some watercolors, and had executed some designs for publishers. Just as she was beginning her career, the Christmas card was becoming a popular and profitable artifact—the first examples appeared in the year she was born, 1846—so it is not surprising that some of her early and successful work was done in the creation of appealing cards. Her first ones sold wildly in a few weeks, her birthday cards and valentines were equally prized, and within a few years she had become enormously popular. Publishers vied for her illustrations, offered numerous commissions, and soon she could set her own terms. She continued to exhibit watercolors, made bookplates for patrons, and in her thirties, she was independent, well rewarded, and prosperous. She wrote verses, too, and in 1879, with the publication of *Under the Window*, her name became, as they say, a household word not only in England but around the world. *Greenawisme* enthralled the French, and the Germans set her verses to music and copied her designs in porcelain. (They even claimed that her family had come from Germany in 1848 and that the name came from *Grüne Weg*, a Düsseldorf street.) A succès fou.

Surfeited now with images as we are, it may be less captivating to fall under the spell of those Kate Greenaway figures, placed in a landscape so redolent of the past—at least the magical past as arranged in Queen Anne style—but their very air of charming contrivance, of being nowhere, their very unreality, in fact, preserves them from inevitable decay. The Greenaway children are solemn and watchful, even when bringing in roses or dancing or waiting to eat their plum pudding; they do not smile. Pensive, grave, their expressions allow for new elaborations and interpretations; they are not the fixed forms of a specific time, typical but limiting; instead they have something of the availability of timeless images.

Kate Greenaway grew up in London, in that London of the old picture books, and in the still legendary countryside that might have been found in England up until 1914. There, Dick Whittington was Lord Mayor of London, a cat could go to see the Queen, a little girl in an Empire dress and a cap and a blue sash could walk over the red tile roofs on her way to Somewhere Town, and sisters upset their milk pails and lost their lockets, while their brothers rolled hoops or climbed over stiles or sang for their supper (of white bread and butter!)—all among talking animals and helpful objects. That world became increasingly and hauntingly attractive, and the infatuation with Kate Greenaway's images was to be felt by a literate, comfortable class, more than ever sensitive to the disappearance of the old idealized pre-industrial harmony, vulnerable to the warnings of Carlyle, Ruskin, and Morris, and immensely interested in all the attempts to offset, ignore, or transform the new world that the machine had made. Kate Greenaway herself had a Queen Anne house designed for her by the preeminent architect of that style, Norman Shaw, and built in Hampstead, then still a little village of old houses and country lanes. Intensely responsive to children, animals, flowers, and landscape, she cherished all her life those fragments of innocence and harmony of her own past, in a life that was actually rather sad and difficult.

Ruskin was, in a sense, her destiny, and almost her undoing. The great art critic and social thinker was not quite crazy when she began to know him, through letters, from 1880 until 1882, although anyone less respectful and childlike might have been wary after his first letter. The learned writer, the figure of powerful influence on the thought and life of his contemporaries, a man then of sixty-two, demanded of the successful and gifted illustrator, whom he had never met, whether she believed in Fairies, in Principalities or Powers, in Ghosts, or in Heaven, whether she had seen Chartres—in all, he listed fifteen such questions in a posturing flirtatious letter, the first of many that would be aimed at her from Brantwood. The worship of sages and great figures who organized Victorian feelings afflicted Kate Greenaway, too, of course, and for twenty years she was to be enthralled and entangled by the increasingly unpredictable, increasingly irrational strictures issuing from

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one of the century's most widely revered sages. Subjugating herself, venerating his discipline, she seems to have perceived later that his involvement in her work and life answered needs and desires arising from his own imperatives. Rossetti, Burne-Jones, and others had been subjected to the same control. Octavia Hill, the Christian Socialist and housing reformer, had relinquished Ruskin's tutelage at the very time that Kate Greenaway was being seduced into it.

And seductive it was, and hazardous. Although Kate Greenaway seems not to have called Ruskin mad until his doctors and his cousin did, she sensed something uncanny in his relation to her, but the instinct for veneration was too deeply rooted. She became involved—with his letters and behavior, his efforts to control and enthrall, his volatile, intemperate, flattering, appealing communications, his rejections, his silences, his threatened withdrawal of affection and concern, his toying with rivals. What she knew about his history must have been sanitized and idealized by the time she knew him. Rose La Touche, the girl whose fantasy image occupied him over so many years, had died more than five years before, and only as Kate Greenaway came to know him did Ruskin's obsessions become more urgent—those intense commands, those schoolgirls who reminded him of Rose, those circles of adoring art students, the bevies of female worshipers, comforters, and correspondents who were all tenderly encouraged. Charming images that Kate Greenaway provided of girls with their baskets of roses were thus pressed into the service of his drama rather than hers. The relationship was intense and emotional—the sage in his sixties and the woman in her thirties—and it went on for nearly twenty years, as they both worked and grew older, not the less passionate for the absence of sexual relations. Ruskin's estrangement and final madness were painful to her, and his death was a terrible blow. Physically ill herself during that time, she died less than two years after he did.

Unfortunately, Rodney Engen's book is too skewed, too focused on Kate Greenaway's psychology and individual emotions to illuminate her relation to other matters of continuing importance. In his desire to humanize her, Engen has left out much that would make sense of her and, curiously, has succeeded in dehumanizing her. Thus the Ruskin story occupies a central position in Engen's book, commanding his (and the reader's) intense sympathy, attention, and identification, and distorting Kate Greenaway's history and work. This book is in some respects far less satisfactory than the early, idealizing 1905 biography on which Engen relied for a good deal of his material; for all its inadequacies, that earlier work at least had Kate Greenaway at its center. Here the perspective is provided by Ruskin's letters to her—he destroyed all *her* letters written before 1887—and this clouded, troubled view of her, without the context in which the relationship developed, does no justice either to Kate Greenaway or to Ruskin himself, who was by that time quite deteriorated. His influence had been immense, extensive, liberating, and fruitful; his importance for the thought of his time (and even still for the thought of our own time) was fresh and vital, something not easily said of every Victorian sage. Kate Greenaway was profoundly affected by him—as who would not have been?—but in her life he was an ominous distraction, and the absence of social and cultural texture in Engen's account leaves dangling most of the interesting questions about her work, and about Ruskin's as well.

Given Engen's knowledge of book illustration, it would have been valuable to have seen Kate Greenaway against the background of art and design education as it developed during her lifetime, with the very different goals proposed for artisans and designers, as compared with "distressed gentlewomen" and middle-class women. The activities of women illustrators and women in the printing trades were important in the success of Kate Greenaway's work, but discussion of it is absent here. The importance of the crafts fostered by the arts-and-crafts movement also contributed to the acclaim her work received, as did the place of crafts and the dignity of labor in the ideas of early socialism. The Greenaway books were not expensively hand decorated or illuminated or hand printed, like productions of the Kelmscott Press and other art presses of the period that revived ancient techniques of book production. Her work was produced by the newest techniques and distributed in the most modern way. She would not have been a Morris disciple, nor was she

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really an embodiment of Ruskin's visions. It would have been most rewarding to have had Rodney Engen's discussion of these matters.

On Her Toes

GOING TO THE DANCE. *By Arlene Croce. Knopf. $20.*

Reviewed by JULIE KAVANAGH

In one of T. S. Eliot's ballet reviews in *The Criterion,* he defines the interests and qualifications necessary to the ideal dance critic—someone, he said, who did not yet exist. These include a close study of primitive dancing and ceremony; a knowledge of ballet technique from barre to pointe work; a need to mix with dancers, musicians, choreographers and producers; a readiness to examine the evolution of liturgy ("For is not the High Mass as performed, for instance at the Madeleine in Paris, one of the highest developments of dancing?"); and finally, the ability to look toward the still-undeveloped science of neurology to discover the secrets of rhythm.

Although it may not extend as far as the subliminal regions Eliot had in mind, the comprehensiveness of Arlene Croce's dance criticism must bring her close to his ideal. She knows and can elucidate every form of dance: black male hoofing, show dancing (see, especially, her *Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers Book*), the most austere post-modern dance, acrobatics, ice-skating. She combines a dancer's understanding of classical technique and command of its vocabulary with a scholar's critical armory. Reviewing *The Nutcracker* she will examine Petipa's departures from versions of the story by E. T. A. Hoffman and Alexandre Dumas as matter-of-factly as a critic of Shakespeare will turn to Geoffrey Bullough's anthology of sources to the plays. The extensive research behind each of her reviews means that both *Going to the Dance* and *Afterimages* (Miss Croce's first collection of *New Yorker* pieces) are valuable textbooks as well as eloquent chronicles of performances.

Croce's views are often dogmatic but always backed by authority. Her reference, recall, and sheer common sense never fail to impress. Take, for example, her remarks on the Royal Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty:* "Several dances from the epochal 1946 production have been restored. . . . The best of these is Ashton's Sapphire variation, now given by one of the Sisters. I would like to see it where Ashton originally put it, in the Prologue, as the variation of a seventh fairy. Without an uneven number of fairies, the Lilac Fairy can't be central, and she should be. I believe Petipa contrived this by making dance roles for the six fairies and a mime role for Lilac. He never did choreograph a Lilac Fairy variation." It is worth pointing out, though, that while a critic is licensed to object to deviations from the original, especially if these are seen to be defective, classical ballet is a living art, changing with each dancer's interpretation and each time a choreographer or director changes his mind. Critics who are purists can find their prescriptive approach thwarted, as Dr. Johnson's was in his attempts to chain the English language. The version of *The Sleeping Beauty* referred to by Croce has in the very week of my writing this review been altered yet again by Dame Ninette de Valois—albeit in small ways. (She has changed a sequence in Princess Florisse's solo and is insisting on pas de bourrées instead of coupés between the jetés en manège in Aurora's act 1 solo.) Croce invariably dons a dance historian's cap, but at the same time she does acknowledge that traditional choreography will be refashioned by contemporary dancers and that deterioration is to some extent a natural process of repertory.

It might be argued that one function of a writer on dance *is* to assume what is almost a choreologist's role—that of perpetuating tradition by making some kind of record of the original choreography. We are certainly indebted to Cyril Beaumont—the Kobbé of dance—for his meticulously detailed, first-hand descriptions of Fokine and Massine's ballets, some of which, like *Le Pavillon d'Armide,* are now virtually obsolete. But today, with dance notation and video cameras taking care of the preservation of ballets, the critics task has become one of defining for posterity what no Benesh squiggles or film can ever adequately do: that is, to conjure on the page the immediacy and singularity of

JULIE KAVANAGH trained to be a dancer at the Royal Ballet School and now reviews dance for *The Spectator* and *The Times Literary Supplement.*

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the performance itself. Croce achieves this largely through linguistic vitality: in her reviews, vague, overworked critical terms of the kind B. H. Haggin might use ("grandly soaring leaps," "dazzling movement," "engagingly brilliant") are superseded by descriptions both witty and graphic ("astonishing long legs that sweep the sky like the beams of searchlights," "the style of [*Troy Game*] is jocular-jock," "the small corps spreads and retracts itself like a fan," Patricia McBride's Columbine "made of ovenproof porcelain, endures").

Another way that Croce re-animates a performance is by making us see for the first time additional dimensions in the dance, uncovering oblique or metaphorical implications in the movements and giving them full play. In her review of Balanchine's *Apollo*, she corrects the Stravinsky scholar, Eric Walter White, pointing out that what he describes as one of "a succession of static poses" are in fact visual metaphors: the three Muses shape themselves into various motifs—a wheelbarrow, troika, boat, and peacock, which is the most beautiful image of all, "made of legs in arabesque lifting high, higher, and higher still in a fanlike spread behind the body of the god as he stands braced for his ascent to Parnassus."

Sometimes Croce's affirmation of images in the dance appears to be a subjective response rather than the choreographer's intention, like the "inconspicuous" visual correspondences she sees in the last episode of Balanchine's *Harlequinade*, when birds, the penchéeing Columbine, Harlequin's spangled costume and a fountain "are made to contain each other loosely in a structure of mutual celebration." Be this as it may, it has always been the prerogative of dance to invite interpretation—"Dancing is all suggestion," as Rodenbach said. It was this compliant, symbolic quality that aroused the interest of French writers like Mallarmé and Valéry, who used the dancer as a living emblem of their own ideas. Loie Fuller was not a woman dancing but a metaphor: she could represent the inexpressible image of art or, as for Rodenbach, a vision of eternity. Rather than imposing metaphysical significance on the dancer, critics now writing are more inclined to demystify her. Witness Croce on Loie Fuller: "A cross-eyed woman flailing in huge draperies, she has an impact on the modern viewer as bewildering as the sight of Sarah Bernhardt keeling over in *Camille*." It was the extinction of personality in Fuller's dancing that most appealed to the poets: Yeats, in the persona of the Old Man in *The Death of Cuchulain* makes quite plain his contempt for the dancers Degas painted, displaying their palpable humanity. "I spit upon their short bodies, their stiff stays, their toes whereon they spin like pegtops, above all upon that chambermaid's face. They might have looked timeless, Rameses the Great, but not the chambermaid, that old maid history."

Modern dance—or more specifically, postmodern dance—has brought with it a much greater magnification of personality in the dancer: autobiography tends to provide the content of many performances. And instead of being accommodatingly abstract, the dancer, who is often the choreographer, has acquired a complex, esoteric system of his or her own ideas. Presented with this, the critic can often only observe and describe, rather than embellish and empathize.

Although Arlene Croce admits to being mystified on occasion, and therefore critically restricted by avant-garde dance—"sitting here in the dark, all cats are gray"—her ability to be absorbed and persuaded by what she sees is remarkable. Just when we think she may have gone too far (as in her unconditional surrender to some of David Gordon's more subversive games with the audience's perception and patience), she restores our good faith in another review, deriding pretension in her usual levelheaded way. When she says of Gordon that he manages to be both inside and outside the world of avant-garde dance, keeping the faith and yet reserving the right to comment and criticize, Croce is also speaking for herself. Bias on her part is rare. An isolated example appears as a tirade against Glen Tetley. Reviewing *Sphinx*, Croce says, "Tetley has no rhythm, either plot-related or music-related; he has no ideas; he hasn't even a sense of the kitsch he's perpetrating in the guise of art." This is absurdly rash. Admittedly Croce had not yet seen *Dances of Albion*, which Tetley created for the Royal Ballet—although she will have had a chance to during the company's New York season in April—but here, emphatically contradicting her invective, Tetley responds to the two contrasting pieces of music by Britten with fine sensitivity. Without being overly illustra-

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tive, the choreography visually transmits given imagery in the score and the group of poems that lie behind it; and his distillation of difficult ideas from Blake's *Jerusalem, The Emanation of the Giant Albion,* which inspired the second half of the ballet, are stunningly projected in the dance.

Attacking Tetley in this way, Croce only substantiates Kenneth Tynan's point that there is no such thing as an impersonal critic because there is no such thing as an impersonal person. Croce on occasion does contradict herself or change her mind. Take, again, the Royal Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty:* writing in 1978 she praises this version for having "everything it needs"; and in 1981 pronounces the same production to be "a heart-twisting disappointment." Her attitude to the Royal Ballet has always been ambivalent. In a review in *Afterimages* she adopts a tone of New World defensiveness: "Do these people think we have no ballet life of our own, nothing to warm us on the cold winter nights when the Royal (or the Bolshoi) is out of town?" She champions the Royal Ballet in 1978, upholding its style and cohesion above the American Ballet Theatre's, but retracts it all three years later. Croce may or may not be right to criticize what she sees as the Royal Ballet's recent disintegration into "a cosy provincialism," but this is nothing new. The company's outlook has always been insular, though the anniversaries of the last two years—the Royal Ballet's 50th, the Royal Opera House's 250th—perhaps made it appear more retrospective and self-content than usual.

Croce's objections to the parochialism of English critics is more solidly founded. These "wattle-shakers," as she calls them, are notoriously unresponsive to anything new in dance. Although it is not easy to be excited by England's avant-garde dance, which derives heavily from America's—Cunningham being the most pervasive influence—reviewing Dance Umbrella seasons, English critics can be just as grudging about groups from outside England. This has probably always been the case: in the 1950s, only Richard Buckle countered the opinion of his "dreary colleagues" by being the first to uphold Balanchine and Martha Graham. Buckle, who no longer reviews regularly, is undoubtedly the liveliest of our dance writers, although he exhibits more than anyone else the peculiarly English proneness to self-exploitation and hero worship. Like Tynan, he was as much of a performer as the artists he wrote about, and again like Tynan, he was a self-confessed fan. (Arnold Haskell was another example of critic *cum* fan, and his book *Balletomania* gave currency to the newly coined word.) Although Croce does identify herself with the performers, the comparison is used only to throw light on her own profession: like a dancer, she must try to view the familiar as a fresh experience, and not let the repetitions show. Her committed intelligence is typical of American dance criticism, or at least the lineage Edwin Denby established, and shames the light, gossipy English approach.

Intellectual Slapstick

THE NOVELIST AS COMEDIAN: GEORGE MEREDITH AND THE IRONIC SENSIBILITY. *By Joseph Moses. Schocken. $21.95. Paper, $9.95.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL GORRA

"English women and men feel toward the quickwitted of their species as to aliens, having the demerits of aliens—wordiness, vanity, obscurity, shallowness, an empty glitter, the sin of posturing." So writes George Meredith in *Diana of the Crossways* (1885)—a sentence that sums up his countrymen's assessment of himself. His novels were "overly clever" and he could not, the *Times* said, master "the knack of stooping to the tastes of his readers." He wrote instead in a spirit of strenuous whimsicality that led, finally, to the maddeningly allusive beginning of *One of Our Conquerors* (1891):

> A gentleman, noteworthy for a lively countenance and a waistcoat to match it, crossing London Bridge at noon on a gusty April day, was almost magically detached from his conflict with the gale by some sly strip of slipperiness, abounding in that conduit of the markets, which had more or less adroitly performed the trick upon preceding passengers, and now laid this one flat amid the shuffle of feet, peaceful for a moment as the uncomplaining who have gone to Sabrina beneath the tides.

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His works, moreover, were full of the most modern and progressive ideas. He was a feminist and had a reputation for raciness. His first novel, *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* (1859), had seemed on the brink of popularity, despite its consciously difficult manner. Then Mudie's, the circulating library whose subscribers' requests were the Victorian equivalent of a best-seller list, refused to handle the book on the grounds of its indecency. It was the worst charge that could be brought against any novel, let alone a first one, and it took Meredith's reputation twenty-six years to weather the blow and the obscurity that soon followed it.

For money, he turned to journalism and a job as a publisher's reader for Chapman and Hall, where his discoveries included George Gissing and Thomas Hardy. He wrote the century's best sonnet sequence, *Modern Love* (1862), its wittiest novel, *The Egoist* (1879), and seven other novels—wrote them without much thought for his audience, watched them go out of print, and did not seem unhappy. And then, as younger writers began to kick against the demands of the Victorian middle class, Meredith's indifference to those demands became an inspiration and a model. The public's rejection of him meant that his partisans had to be fiercely combative on his behalf, and when *Diana of the Crossways* made him unexpectedly famous at the age of fifty-seven, that fierceness turned into exaltation. Meredith's cottage at the foot of Box Hill became, until his death in 1909, the much-visited shrine of the last great Victorian sage, and his novels the favorite furniture of advanced but genteel drawing rooms. Bloomsbury grew up on him.

The fashion for Meredith was based not upon his style but upon the fact that he was England's first novelist of ideas, most of them about what E. M. Forster, in *Howard's End*, called "personal relations"—and fashions in ideas change almost as quickly as they do in women's shoes. "Personal relations" seemed somehow less important after World War I, and Forster assisted in Meredith's revaluation: "His philosophy has not worn well. His heavy attacks on sentimentality—they bore the present generation. . . . And his visions of nature—they do not endure. . . . When he gets serious and noble-minded there is a strident overtone." "And yet, . . . " he adds—and yet Meredith is in some ways a great novelist. Meredith criticism is, as V. S. Pritchett says in *George Meredith and English Comedy* (1969)—a brief but still the best book on the novelist—a continual "and yet" that has enabled him to survive, just barely, the demolition of his reputation by the progressives whom he had helped form.

Today Meredith's reputation has a narrow base. His work has never—aside from its late-Victorian vogue—been widely read by the general reader. If nothing else, *Richard Feverel*'s "indecency" kept Meredith from creating a public that could grow up with him. His work had—and still has—to be discovered. It has never been assumed as part of one's birthright in the language, as has that of Dickens or George Eliot, so that he is now the only major Victorian novelist whose survival is almost entirely in the hands of the academy. But there his reputation is, if limited, absolutely secure and rests upon the one part of his philosophy that has worn well and will continue to do so: his belief in the power of comedy to vanquish folly. Comedy, Meredith says in his 1877 lecture "On the Idea of Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit," depends on "clear reason" and "strips folly to the skin, displays the imposture of the creature." Or, as Joseph Moses says in the epigraph, borrowed from Wallace Stevens, to his new and unfortunately pedestrian book, comedy exists "to make a new intelligence prevail" over social life.

The Comic Spirit presides over Meredith's novels as a whole, but in particular over *Richard Feverel* and *The Egoist*, which have proved his most enduring works (though *Diana of the Crossways* has recently gained some currency from feminist criticism). His idea of comedy is, however, more precise—and crueler—than that held by most comic writers. He is said to have had a prodigal gift of repartee, but his novels are not dominated by it. Nor can they be characterized—like *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Pride and Prejudice*—as comedies about courtship, in which characters come not just to self-knowledge but to a rich and generous awareness of human possibility. Self-knowledge is chastening for Meredith. His characters tend to be wiser but far less happy at the end of the novel than they were at the beginning. He came, quite early, to believe that life was an ordeal, in which

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one was tested and tempered and finally strengthened by "thwackings" that must be endured. And so his novels are built around a type of intellectual slapstick, which Pritchett calls "ruthless," in which a character is tormented by malicious "imps," whose task is both to call forth and to expose folly. Those imps torment the Egoist in particular, the one who sees the world only in relation to the self. The depiction of self-destructive pride causes many of Meredith's novels to veer toward tragedy at their conclusion.

Comedy and tragedy were always for Meredith more a matter of one's perspective on material than a matter of the material itself. Moses is at his best in describing Meredith's sense of the relationship between comedy and tragedy. At the heart of his comedy is a sad realization of human limitations, of which the reader must be made aware, a realization that is finally a reminder of the inevitability of death. But black humor, which plays off that inevitability, wasn't available to Meredith. He tried to demonstrate it, rather, by wrenching his novels into tragedy plain and simple, "testing," as Moses says, "the tragic by the comic and vice versa." But Meredith's comedy is too cold, too intellectual, too purely social to stand the pressure of a move to the depiction of genuine and permanent human suffering, and so the result of that move is often, as Pritchett holds, a "suicide of his talent."

The Ordeal of Richard Feverel is one such suicide. It deals with a single father's attempt to raise his son according to a System designed to ensure that his boy will become an obedient pattern for youth. It has a biographical base in that in 1858 Meredith's first wife, the daughter of Thomas Love Peacock, had deserted him for the painter Henry Wallis, leaving him with their four-year-old son to raise alone. Richard's father, Sir Austin, is, like Meredith, an aphorist; the novel is peppered with specimens of his work, which provide a comic mechanism against which to see the novel's action. But aphorisms are inadequate to deal with a son's difficult adolescence. Systems can't be made to work with people, and Meredith finds Sir Austin wanting with an irony that Moses says is, above all, self-directed. The System fails. Richard's marriage, of which his father does not approve, destroys their relationship, and the novel ends with Richard fighting a duel to save his wife's reputation and with her subsequent derangement and death.

The intrusion of violence is meant to disturb—and yet it doesn't. Meredith's prose is too arch, he was too insistent a theoretician—a System builder—to fuse comedy and tragedy, as did Thackeray, who dispenses with the aphorisms that in *Richard Feverel* come close to making tragedy nothing more than the author's "I told you so." *Richard Feverel* falls into two parts, neither of them completely realized. It is a novel of marvelous pieces rather than a sustained whole. As a reviewer said of Meredith's picaresque novel, *The Adventures of Harry Richmond* (1871), it "would be far truer to say that it has the stuff for half-a-dozen first-rate novels in it, than that it is a first-rate novel itself." But that "stuff" includes the century's best evocation of boyhood and, in particular, of a boy's coming to sexual awareness.

The Egoist is a far more successful novel, one that seems to me to rival Jane Austen's *Emma* in its technical achievement. Its plot is simple: Clara Middleton has gotten herself engaged to Sir Willoughby Patterne, a man of perfect parts who is also a perfect egoist. She wants to break the engagement, but convention demands that he "release" her from it, and this he refuses to do. Her attempt to get free of him takes six hundred pages, which for sustained brilliance of phrase, do not have an equal aside from the dramatic works, those of William Congreve in particular, to which they are often compared:

> Degenerate or not (and there is no just reason to suppose it) Sir Willoughby was a social Egoist, fiercely imaginative in whatsoever concerned him. He had discovered a greater realm than that of the sensual appetites, and he rushed across and around it in his conquering period with an Alexander's pride. On these wind-like journeys he had carried Constantia, subsequently Clara; and however it may have been in the case of Miss Durham, in that of Miss Middleton it is almost certain she caught a glimpse of his interior from sheer fatigue in hearing him discourse of it.

Clara is one of the wittiest and most engaging heroines in the nineteenth-century novel, and *The Egoist* is filled with magnificent set pieces—in particular a prose ode to the glories of old port. These are local triumphs. The

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novel as a whole is more successful than *Richard Feverel*, because in it Meredith knew his limits. It teeters on the brink of tragedy and then pulls back, so that its comedy contains not a death but a memento mori in the form of the Comic Spirit's instrument, Laetitia Dale. She makes Sir Willoughby see the extent of his egoism at the cost of her own vitality. But Comedy is cold. The novel suggests that her effort is touched with folly, and the book ends with a suspicious examination of its own premises, which, for all the laughter it evokes, is finally disturbing.

Moses' treatment of this novel, however, is disappointing, which is characteristic of his book as a whole. He begins an argument of his own, but loses it in the pursuit of a flaw in someone else's, so that his chapter about *The Egoist* is much more about the critic Dorothy Van Ghent than it is about George Meredith. Answering other critics is, of course, a standard academic ploy. But Van Ghent's essay (1953) is one of the more recent pieces to which Moses responds. This scholarly book pays far less attention to current scholarship than to Meredith's idolaters among the more obscure turn-of-the-century literati. Moses is capable of shrewd, close readings of individual passages. But he has none of his subject's gift for writing aphorisms or quotable generalizations, and his prose grows vague and awkward when he attempts to discuss the larger aesthetic implications of Meredith's work or to generalize from novel to novel. Moses' discussion of the relationship between comedy and tragedy in Meredith's work is illuminating, and his choice of epigraphs from Stevens's "The Comedian as the Letter C" is inspired. But, with these exceptions, it cannot really be said that one knows Meredith much better after reading *The Novelist as Comedian* than one did before.

The book's most serious flaw is one of omission. Moses' use of Wallace Stevens implies a case for Meredith's relationship to modernism. Time and again he hints at that case, even to the extent of implying, as Virginia Woolf did in her 1928 essay on the centennial of his birth, Meredith's responsibility for the modern novel. But Moses never makes the case completely, and that is unfortunate, because any significant rena-

*The achievement of these essays is towering**

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science of Meredith's reputation will rest upon those claims.

Almost simultaneously with Flaubert and long before Henry James, George Meredith insisted that the novel is, above all, a self-conscious artifact. The Victorian period's most relentless experimenter with form, he was the one English novelist of his century to insist upon the necessity of making his work difficult and his style obscure—dislocating, in T. S. Eliot's phrase, "language into its meaning"—in order to capture the truth of his material. One must read his novels as slowly and carefully as one reads late James. It must be admitted that they do not always repay that care and that "Through the Vague to the Infinitely Little," a chapter title from *One of Our Conquerors*, can at times seem remarkably apposite. But in his insistence that the reader must work at a book and that the writer make no concessions to public taste, he presaged and shaped the aesthetic beliefs of the modernists who grew up reading him. As Gillian Beer says in a better book than this one (*Meredith: A Change of Masks*, 1970), Meredith represented "for the next generation of writers the dominating creative presence whom they must escape but can never entirely leave behind." Yet, anyone who could write *The Egoist* is of more than historical interest. The body of Meredith's work—maddening, inventive, difficult, and finally refreshing—deserves to be more widely read.

The Troubadour

THE LETTERS OF GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, 1857–1880. *Edited and translated by Francis Steegmuller. Harvard University Press. $15.*

Reviewed by VICTOR BROMBERT

Francis Steegmuller has given us more than a fine translation of Gustave Flaubert's letters—more, because his ear is so keenly attuned to the modulations of this correspondence and his craft is so accomplished that the English text is, as it were, transparent and trans-vocal. It is the voice of Flaubert we hear or, more precisely, the oral qualities of his epistolary style. Steegmuller plays Flaubert for us the way a musician plays the music of a master. Every turn is an act of understanding and interpretation. His is a profoundly mimetic act—as is no doubt the best criticism and, as far as Flaubert was concerned, the best fiction writing.

There is another sense in which this is more than a translation. *The Letters of Gustave Flaubert* is conceived as a narrative: individual letters are grouped under chapter headings ("The Writing of *Salammbô*"; "The Battle of *Salammbô*"; "Interlude: Society"; etc.), and Steegmuller's own commentary and informative notes provide the legato that tells the story of a life in which the act of writing became the chief adventure. What Steegmuller's two volumes (the first, covering the years 1830–1857, was published in 1980) amount to, then, is an extremely discerning selection of letters set in a biographical context, a kind of American Flaubert *par lui-même*.

It needs to be said that *The Letters of Gustave Flaubert* is, in fact, a selection of edited letters. Not only do we not get the complete correspondence (the thirteen volumes of the Conard edition, which do not include the additional letters Jean Bruneau is currently publishing in the Pléiade edition, have here been reduced to two volumes), but individual letters are frequently streamlined. Thus, the translation of the first letter in this second volume begins at the end of the original second paragraph and ends in the middle of the fourth, leaving out more than half the contents, which relate to a number of topics: friendship, artistic objectivity, Feydeau's *Les Quatre Saisons*, interesting remarks about the Vulgate, and the translation from the Latin. Steegmuller is scrupulous about indicating where cuts have been made. But ellipsis points do not, of course, suggest the amount that has been left out. For instance, between the letter (itself edited) of December 12, 1857, to Ernest Feydeau and the letter of the following April 23–24 to Louis Bouilhet, seventeen letters, according to my count, have been skipped, some of which—namely the ones addressed to Mademoiselle Leroyer de Chantepie—are interesting for a variety of reasons.

In deciding not to give us a complete Flau-

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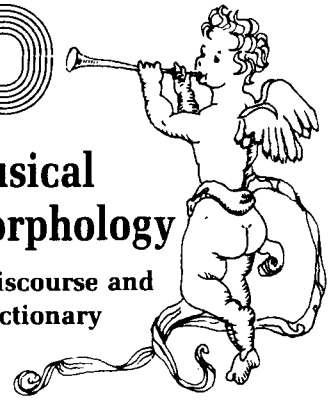
bert correspondence, Mr. Steegmuller was doubtlessly accepting some hard realities of the publishing business—even though his publisher is a most distinguished university press. The ensuing limitation in no way detracts from his superb achievement. But here also lies the real difficulty. The excellence of this translation of a large body of selected letters makes it extremely unlikely, to say the least, that we will have a translation of the complete correspondence of Flaubert in the foreseeable future. Regrettable though this may be, we are, for the present, extremely fortunate to have Steegmuller's Flaubert.

This edition has the added merit of including a number of judiciously selected letters by some of his correspondents, among them moving letters by George Sand, Guy de Maupassant, and a beautiful one by Emile Zola ("You are our teacher and our father"), written after the clumsy, unsuccessful attempt of some of Flaubert's friends to secure for him a sinecure as librarian of the Bibliothèque Mazarine. As for the selection of the novelist's own letters, it was very intelligently determined by the desire to emphasize aspects of the correspondence relevant to the writing of the masterpieces, the craft of fiction, and the present-day reputation of this "novelist's novelist."

Not surprisingly, the letters confirm a view of Flaubert-the-modernist. The cult of impersonality, hatred of realism (even though, after *Madame Bovary*, he was considered its chief proponent), the conviction that there is such a thing as "economy" of text, the belief in the intransitive, self-referential value of literature—all these aspects stand out in sharp relief. Remembering how his heart throbbed when he looked at a bare wall on the Acropolis, Flaubert writes to George Sand: "I wonder whether a book, quite apart from what it says, cannot produce the same effect. In the precise fitting of its parts, the rarity of its elements, the polish of its surface, the harmony of the whole, is there not an intrinsic Virtue?" A rhetorical question such as this harks back to Flaubert's proclaimed desire to write "a book about nothing," a book in which neither the subject nor the characters matter. To depict exceptional beings was not, he felt, the function of art. Nor should the artist, despite George Sand's advice to him, make the artist himself the hero of his book. What counts is the *text*. Flaubert even yearns for a



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new form of criticism that would focus on artistic devices and processes, instead of providing futile glosses. Above all, he appears convinced that genuine works of art are essentially non-referential, that art and life are distinct, even antagonistic, realities.

Notions such as these invariably elate and inspire a certain breed of modern critic intent on viewing Flaubert as a non-figurative novelist, uniquely devoted to the problematics of textuality—the very model of the modern writer, subverting meaning and aiming at undecidability. In reality, Flaubert's correspondence is full of surprises and contradictions, which makes it hard to enlist him in the militant ranks of modernism or—whatever it means—"post-modernism." Not only does Flaubert repeatedly proclaim his allegiance to Romanticism (declaring himself to be "a rabid old Romantic," an old troubadour), but he remains stubbornly convinced that a good subject and the ability to live in symbiotic relation with created characters are indispensable to the truth of a literary work. A book, he states, must "*sweat* truth," and for it to do so, the author "has to be stuffed to the ears with his subject." A "good subject" is a generative force, a "matrix idea." Even the cult of impersonality appears challenged: masterpieces come into being only when there is concordance of the subject and the "author's temperament." A book, Flaubert maintains, is something essentially organic, "a part of ourselves." And far from calling for the death of the characters in fiction, he affirms their supreme importance, if not their pre-existence, to the text.

In two revealing letters to the philosopher Hippolyte Taine, Flaubert records the degree to which he is haunted by his characters while writing his novels. As for his numerous descriptions (according to Roland Barthes, they have no thematic function and only serve the *effet de réel*!), Flaubert unambiguously states that they are never gratuitous, that they all relate to his characters and "play a role in the plot." Flaubert goes so far as to state that "style *underlies* words as much as it is embodied by them." Statements such as these obviously run counter to modernist doctrine.

Flaubert's own style, in these letters, ranges from tenderness and lyricism to scatological exuberance. His tone is colorful, pungent, moody, passing swiftly from depression to elation. He is given to bursts of enthusiasm, tirades of indignation, expressions of self-doubt. He indulges in exotic longings, adolescent jokes, a premature sense of aging. But underlying it all, there is an unflinching sense of purpose, a desire to get down again and again to the business of literature, an addiction to a posthumous perspective on life.

The chapter headings provided by Mr. Steegmuller draw attention to Flaubert's preoccupation with his artistic problems as he faced the challenge of each new work. The correspondence tells us a great deal about his state of mind, his intentions, his worries. Writing *Salammbô*, the historical novel about Carthage, Flaubert strove to reconcile archaeology with his oneiric vision; he understood that his orgiastic imagination linked images of sadistic carnal excesses to a desire for the impossible. He knew that *L'Education sentimentale*, though set in nineteenth-century France, was more genuinely concerned with history: "I want to write the moral history of the men of my generation." To do so, he drove himself to tireless research: on financial investments in 1847, on Barbès's mistreatment in jail, on restaurant menus, on the means and schedules of transportation from Paris to Fontainebleau during the 1848 revolution, on the condition of the Lyons silk weavers in the 1830s.

The mood changes during the composition of the stories in *Three Tales*—especially while he was at work on *A Simple Heart*, which Flaubert undertook to please George Sand, who had urged him to write with greater compassion, and who, to Flaubert's great distress, did not live to read this very moving story. With the writing of *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, Flaubert returns to one of his obsessions: the inventory of human folly and ineptness. Progress on this strange, encyclopedic novel, interrupted by his own death, corresponds to a period of general disarray and anguish. About his two grotesque and inept protagonists: "Their stupidity is mine, and I'm dying of it." But in the end, the real anguish came not so much from inadequacies in the face of life and ideas, as from the "*affres du style*," the "Pangs of Style"—the self-inflicted, austere, and heroic struggle with words.

Despite professed indifference to journalistic gossip, Flaubert was well informed, and

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his letters are rich in topical references. But he is at his best writing about his own work in progress, or reacting to other writers. Thanking Baudelaire for *Les Paradis artificiels*, he shrewdly noted that the poet's obsession with evil has a theological cast ("One senses something like the leaven of Catholicism"). And it is moving to hear him proclaim in unrestrained tones his admiration for the "colossal" Victor Hugo. After reading thousands of lines of Hugo's *La Légende des siècles* ("lines such as have never before been written"), he wanted to yell: "Tie me up! . . . Old Hugo has driven me mad."

There are more somber notes toward the end of his life—notes prophetic of future political and military cataclysms. The greatest crisis of pessimism occurred in the wake of the Prussian invasion in 1870 (the Flaubert house in Croisset was occupied), and he had apocalyptic visions of the global wars to come, pitting races and continents against each other ("We'll see several million men kill one another at one go"). He predicted total dehumanization, mass destruction, systematic genocide. Moods such as these fed the hostile critique of culture and humanism that infuses his treatment of Bouvard and Pécuchet, and which makes them direct ancestors of Sartre's Self-Taught Man. As happened so often with him, the grim thought was translated into the grotesque and even the facetious. At one point he was so indignant about France's politics that he not only ceased wearing his Legion of Honor ribbon but intended to ask his friend Turgenev "what one has to do to become a Russian."

The correspondence does not always reveal Flaubert at his loftiest. His hatred of the bourgeois smacks of affectation, his derision of modern democracy is facile, his opinion of women is downright silly (they are, he says, incapable of literary judgment), and his call for a government of mandarins is tainted by bad faith. He was, after all, only too pleased, in the days of the Second Empire, to be a familiar of Princess Mathilde's salon on the rue de Courcelles—that same princess (a first cousin of Napoleon III) who made it known that Sainte-Beuve, by accepting the senatorship that she had helped him obtain, had become a "vassal of the Empire"!

Yet the character of Flaubert emerges, on the whole, as endearing; and his stature, for

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anyone who admires his work, can only be enhanced by a great many of the letters. Capable of tenderness and generosity, maintaining throughout his life his dignity as writer, resisting the lures of journalism, Flaubert also shows great independence of mind. Steegmuller quotes Maxime du Camp's account of how Flaubert, at the court in Compiègne, and in the presence of the Empress, dared defend Hugo, the exiled enemy of Napoleon III whom he had attacked in *Les Châtiments* with vehement invective. *"Les Châtiments!* Magnificent poetry! I'll recite it, if you like." This took courage.

In his letters, Flaubert gives ample evidence of such high-mindedness and freedom of spirit. Writing was for him more than an addiction or a profession; it was a vocation requiring asceticism and sacrifice. Entering the life of letters was like taking orders. Steegmuller, whose selection brings out these central features, also stresses them in his excellent commentary and notes. His own tone does justice to Flaubert's sense of the dignity of writing. He shares with the author he serves so well that "ultimate humility before the great creations of art" which he praises in his introductory pages.

What Is a Tory?

IN DEFIANCE OF OLIGARCHY: THE TORY PARTY 1714–60. *By Linda Colley. Cambridge University Press. $45.*

Reviewed by DONALD GREENE

As I started to write this review, Representative Phil Gramm of Texas announced his change of party affiliation from Democrat to Republican, resigned his seat in Congress, and offered himself for reelection. It was predicted that his constituents, satisfied that the change of label indicated no shift in his political ideology, would again vote for him enthusiastically. The incident caused some soul-searching among journalistic political commentators, one of whom was moved to inquire plaintively, "What *is* a Democrat?" A good question. What is a Democrat, when, say, a Hubert Humphrey and a Herman Talmadge could both lay claim to being one? What is a Republican, when the term subsumes both a Barry Goldwater and a Jacob Javits? And what is the definition of a "party" that can include holders of such seemingly incompatible political ideologies?

To the student of eighteenth-century British political history, the contemplation of the twentieth-century American political scene is continually fascinating. Colonial—pardon the expression—cultures are notoriously more conservative than those of the mother country. American speech remains much closer to the pronunciation of seventeenth-century England than does "standard"—that is, BBC—twentieth-century English pronunciation. Some years ago the senior English jurist, Lord Chancellor Hailsham, wrote, "In many ways the American legal system resembles to the eye of a contemporary English lawyer nothing so much as a gigantic historical museum of olde Englishe practices that, rightly or wrongly, in the 200 years since Independence, we have cast aside or forgotten." And the twentieth-century American political scene much more resembles that of eighteenth-century Britain, with an executive (the Crown) independent of and often at odds with the legislature (the two houses of Parliament)—a system fossilized here in the intensely conservative Constitution of 1789—than it does that of twentieth-century Britain, where the leadership of the majority party in the House of Commons dictatorially wields the full power of both the executive and the legislature, and where, as a result, rigid party discipline is enforced much more stringently than in the United States.

Since Sir Lewis Namier's revolutionary studies began to appear in the late 1920s, many British historians have written on the political structure of eighteenth-century Britain. But I sometimes think they have been bemused by the later British model. There seems to be a feeling that, since one can predict with some assurance from his label of "Conservative" or "Labourite" what response (knee jerk?) any individual British politician will give on any controversial issue, one should be able to do the same with someone labeled "Tory" or "Whig" in the eighteenth

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century. Or, conversely, that when a politician has been identified as having given support to a side of an issue the historian has labeled "Tory," that individual *is* a Tory (even though, a few years later, we may find him supporting the Whig side of another issue). The fallacy of misplaced concreteness, it has been called. Linda Colley's is one of the best of such studies. But its subtitle inevitably impels the reader to search through the book for answers to such questions as: Just what *was* a Tory in the half century under consideration? What was the structure of the "party" to which he is supposed to have belonged? And how did that party function? Despite Professor Colley's admirably detailed research, I'm afraid the reader won't find any answers here—and he won't find them in the writings of her predecessors either.

To be sure, nothing is more protean than the semantics of political labels. Take "liberal." When first used in a British political context, it meant one who advocated freedom of private enterprise from governmental interference. Here is a succinct statement of the position:

> It is not by the intermeddling of . . . the omniscient and omnipotent state, but by the prudence and energy of the people, that England has hitherto been carried forward in civilization. . . . Our rulers will best promote the improvement of the nation by strictly confining themselves to their own legislative duties, by leaving capital to find its most lucrative course, commodities their fair price, industry and intelligence their natural reward, idleness and folly their natural punishment, by maintaining peace, by diminishing the price of law, and by observing strict economy in every department of the state.

Who wrote this—one of Margaret Thatcher's advisers, or some English disciple of Ronald Reagan or Milton Friedman? No: it was written in 1830 by Thomas Babington Macaulay, a prominent young Liberal (or Whig) Member of Parliament, soon to be a junior minister in the first British Liberal government. The same doctrine was preached, and practiced, by the great Liberal leader William Gladstone, four times prime minister, scion of a prosperous Liverpool commercial family. The oppressive working conditions in the burgeoning factories of northern England, where

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capital was left to find its most lucrative course, led to a demand by such Tories as the seventh Lord Shaftesbury and Michael Sadler for legislation regulating hours of work; Sadler was vigorously opposed by Macaulay. Earlier, those eighteenth-century Tories, Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, had—in the spirit of the New Deal—called for strengthening the power of the central administration to remedy a situation in which, as Goldsmith put it, "Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law." Today, Macaulay's and Gladstone's position would be called "conservatism" and Johnson's and Goldsmith's "liberalism."

"Tory" is probably the political label that has been in longest continuous use in the English-speaking world. It is still a fairly neutral synonym for members of the Conservative parties in Great Britain and Canada, who offer no particular objection to it; its brevity makes it useful for headline writers. But it has had many vicissitudes. It originated in the 1670s as a derogatory epithet for those opposed to the movement to exclude the future James II, the legitimate heir, from the throne because of his militant Roman Catholicism; those who supported the movement were nicknamed Whigs. In the reign of Anne (1702–14), over the question of whether the bloody war with Louis XIV's France should be continued until France was completely crushed, the hawks came to be called Whigs and the doves Tories. This represented some odd semantic reversals. Marlborough and Godolphin, the leaders of the war party, started their careers as Tories, as opponents of the Exclusion Bill. The leaders of those who advocated a negotiated peace, Harley and Bolingbroke, came from distinctly non-Tory backgrounds, and their chief propagandist, Jonathan Swift, insisted all his life that he was a Whig of primal purity.

When the young "reforming" George III came to the throne in 1760, the older Walpole-Pelham Whig group, which had enjoyed a near monopoly of power for four decades, found itself replaced by competing Whig groups, led at various times by George Grenville, the elder William Pitt, and eventually Lord North. All these would have been upset by the idea that they were anything but Whigs. But their disgruntled predecessors hit on the familiar ploy of tarring these alleged traitors to authentic Whiggism "Tories"—much as the John Birch Society labeled those it disapproved of, such as Dwight Eisenhower, crypto-Communists. The label stuck. Hence, no doubt, the American use of the term for those who supported North's efforts to maintain the colonies' ties to Britain.

The younger Pitt, who worshipped his father, would never have thought of himself as anything but a Whig. But in the debates over his policy of war against the French revolutionaries and Napoleon, the label Tory became more and more firmly attached to him and his followers; after all, his opponent, Charles Fox, was the heir to the tradition of Walpole, who, unlike other Whig leaders, such as Marlborough and the elder Pitt, pursued a pacific policy toward France. The transformation of post-Pitt Tories into Conservatives during the political confusion of the 1830s to the 1860s still needs careful study. Whigs—the heirs of Fox and Edmund Burke, the party of the great noble landowners—remained distinct for some time from another important wing of the new Liberal party, the radicals, whose ranks included the plebeian industrialist Joseph Chamberlain. Then in the late nineteenth century, in protest against Gladstone's Irish policy, Whig magnates such as the eighth duke of Devonshire and the fifth marquess of Lansdowne, as well as Chamberlain, defected to the Conservative (Tory) party, which in Britain today is the party of business and inherited capital, a state of affairs that would have amazed Johnson and Goldsmith.

The point of this rough sketch of some of the metamorphoses of party labels over the past three centuries is that it is difficult to demonstrate that any of them represents a consistent political ideology over any substantial period of time. But Macaulay, having absorbed the new gospel of inevitable human progress, cleared away that difficulty with breathtaking efficiency: "Throughout the whole of that great movement [of British political history from the Magna Carta of 1215 to the Reform Act of 1832] . . . there have been, under some name or other, two sets of men, those who were before their age and those who were behind it." The name under which the first set is known from the seventeenth century onward is "Whigs" and the second "Tories"—"progressive" versus "reaction-

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ary," "left wing" versus "right wing" (the latter dichotomy coming from the semicircular seating of the French National Assembly, though inapplicable to the British Parliament). And of course doubts must always persist about the mental capacity of any who resist "the wave of the future": "Tories are the stupid party," some modern Liberal or Labour politician summed it up, though the notion had been adumbrated long before in the brilliant Whig propaganda of Addison (Sir Roger de Coverley, the Tory Fox Hunter) and Fielding (Squire Western).

Macaulay's "Whig interpretation of history" was taken for granted by later popular historians—J. R. Green, W. E. H. Lecky, George Macaulay Trevelyan, and Marlborough's descendant, that grand old unreconstructed Whig, Winston Churchill. But it suffered a blow when, in 1931, Herbert Butterfield called devastating attention to the fallacy of "the ratification of the present" that was implicit in the "Whig interpretation." And Namier, in *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (1929) by a minute analysis of the actual political behavior of the members of Parliament during the 1760s, cast ridicule on the notion that ideology played any significant role in motivating that behavior. What did? Generally, as usual, self-interest, family and regional considerations, the hope of building a political power base.

No one has yet ventured to dispute Namier's well-documented diagnosis of the terms of practical politics in the later eighteenth century. But when Robert Walcott, Jr., in 1956, applied Namier's method to the political maneuverings of Anne's reign, there was a cry of protest from British historians. Surely ideology must have played some role in the earlier periods: British politicians could not have been so universally un-ideological as Namier and Walcott made out! That Walcott was an American, and familiar with the Democrat / Republican synthesis, may have had something to do with his point of view; and that modern British historians were brought up in the milieu of current British rigid party discipline, where more lip service, at least, is paid to "ideology," may have affected their point of view. Professor Colley declares that one of the "prime intentions" of her book is to show that "the tory parliamentary party retained ideological identity." But what that

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ideological identity was is hard to discover. On the various issues of the time, those whom she labels Tories and those whom she labels Whigs seem to present as heterogeneous a spectrum of responses as do modern Democrats and Republicans.

Linda Colley is a pupil of the distinguished eighteenth-century British historian Sir Jack (J. H.) Plumb. Plumb (perhaps not without significance, a pupil of Macaulay's great-nephew Trevelyan), in his *Growth of Political Stability in England, 1675–1725* (1967) went along with the traditional explanation that Tory political power after the accession of George I in 1714 was negligible, so that Walpole and his Whigs were able to establish an "oligarchical" political structure that ensured a laudable "stability" in eighteenth-century and later British politics (the ratification of the present?). Professor Colley challenges her mentor's thesis and tries to show that throughout her half century there *was* a Tory party that provided effective opposition to the Whig oligarchy.

The problem is that, although she dubs her various troublemakers for the Whig regime "Tories" and, collectively, "the Tory party," we are never given any description of that party's organization. If it had one at all, it must have been very different from the tight, centrally controlled organization of the modern British Conservative and Labour parties—an even looser one, if possible, than that of the modern Republican and Democratic parties, if parties they be. Nor are we ever informed just why those whom she designates (often arbitrarily it seems to me) Tories and Whigs are entitled to those labels.

Two illustrations. In the Abingdon election of 1754, we are told of "the Whig candidate Henry Thrale." After Thrale finally got elected to Parliament from Southwark in 1765, he was, for most of his fifteen years as a member of Parliament, an unswerving follower of Lord North, to whom Professor Colley attributes a "Tory lineage," whatever that may mean. Thrale's chief claim to fame is his intimacy with the "arch-Tory" Samuel Johnson, who wrote several of Thrale's election manifestos for him. When and how did Thrale cease to be a Whig and become a Tory? Or did Johnson become a Whig? After all, in one of the political pamphlets he wrote at the urging of Thrale and the North administration, he deplored "the frigid neutrality of the Tories" in the Wilkes affair. Or perhaps the simple bipartite paradigm is inadequate to account for the complex actualities of British eighteenth-century, as of American twentieth-century, political life. Perhaps, as Johnson declared, when Boswell badgered him for an official pronouncement on the subject, "A wise Tory and a wise Whig, I believe, will agree. Their principles are the same. . . ."

Again: "Tory paternalism did of course exist. Georgian fiction delineated its acceptable and unacceptable faces in Squire Allworthy and Lady Catherine de Bourgh." Why should we think Allworthy a Tory? Fielding, always a sturdy Whig (of one brand or another), presents Allworthy most favorably by contrasting him with his caricature of a Tory squire, Western. Lady Catherine was by birth a Fitzwilliam, daughter of the previous earl and sister of the present earl bearing that name. The earls Fitzwilliam were, like their neighbors and relations, the Cavendishes, dukes of Devonshire, among the great northern Whig magnates of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Jane Austen, who was distantly related to both families—she was the great-great-niece of Marlborough's paymaster, the first duke of Chandos—knew perfectly well what she was about in giving her hero the names of those two great Yorkshire Whig dynasties, the Fitzwilliams and the D'Arcys. One would like to have heard Lady Catherine's response to being told by Professor Colley that she was a Tory. But the apriority is apparent: a stupid, arrogant, paternalistic, titled lady must, by definition, be a Tory.

A few small points that may be of use in preparing a second edition—and Professor Colley's book, simply as a rich encyclopedia of political behavior in eighteenth-century Britain, deserves to be kept in print. One would like to know how the "True Blue" of "left-wing" Puritans of the English Civil War—the color of Dryden's "Protestant Poet" Shadwell—came to be the symbolic color of the Tories, as it still is of the British Conservative party. The book too easily takes it for granted that Protestant dissent in the eighteenth century and Tory politics are incompatible: recent study of the voting habits of the Dissenters shows that they were far from monolithic. George III did not ascend the throne at the age of twenty, but at twenty-two.

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Garrick's song was not "Hearts" but "Heart of Oak." It is wrong to refer to the duke of Bolton as "Lord Bolton" and to the duke of Shrewsbury as "Lord Shrewsbury" or, even worse, "the earl of Shrewsbury." It is disheartening to find the spelling "Westminister" in a Cambridge University Press book. It is wrong to reproduce the eighteenth-century abbreviation for *the* as *ye*. The index is unacceptably meager.

Still, for years to come, the book will be a treasure house of valuable information about the political maneuverings of the time, even though its methodology prevents it from casting any very useful light on just what collective Tory ideology is. Perhaps Namier and Walcott were right—there was none, only ad hoc jockeying over various issues of the day. Considering the results of a rigorously ideological approach to politics in many parts of the modern world, perhaps this was not such a bad thing.

A final thought to ponder, from John Brooke's *King George III* (1972): "The fathers of the American republic were the heirs of the Tory tradition in British politics, and perhaps the only true Tories in the world today are to be found in the United States." Perhaps not a bad thing either.

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The Reader Replies

Science Education for the Non-Scientist

As a scientist who has written extensively about science for the general reader with authority and literary skill, and without condescension, Jeremy Bernstein is better qualified than most to propose new ways of providing for the scientific education of non-scientists. The aim of the courses suggested in his column is to reduce the gap in knowledge that separates non-scientists from the world of science and to make them at home in the civilization that the uses of science have created ("Scientific Education for the Non-Scientist," THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Winter 1982/83). The educational problem he is addressing is an old one, but Bernstein's discussion is itself evidence that, of the various programs introduced over the years, some well thought-out and useful, none has yet made an enduring impression.

The plight of the non-scientist in a scientific and technological civilization was given a classic statement in *The Education of Henry Adams* (1918), but since 1959 it has been C. P. Snow's *Two Cultures* that has provided the focus for much of the public discussion of the issue, and the phrase, "the two cultures," though it has become a cliché, is still invoked as a revealed truism. Bernstein finds it necessary to counter the authority that the enormous success of this book gave to Snow's ideas, an authority sustained in part by the implication that Snow was at home in both cultures. Bernstein calls attention to Snow's "remoteness from real science," but equally limiting was Snow's lack of sophistication about literature and his "remoteness" from much of the important literature of his day. Of T. S. Eliot's often-quoted lines, "This is the way the world ends / Not with a bang but a whimper," Snow remarks with the contemptuous impatience he shows toward literary folk who are not up-to-date on scientific matters, "one of the least likely prophesies ever made."

Snow fixed upon two cultures because he wished to affirm the position of science as the one dominant intellectual force of our times and to gain respect for its tremendous presence and influence against what he thought of as an unfriendly group: "Literary intellectuals at one pole," he wrote, "at the other scientists, and as the most representative, the physical scientists." Why only two cultures, and why these two? The dichotomy serves Snow's rhetorical purpose, but it is analytically incomplete and a little naive. The position of science among the important intellectual activities of our times represents a special, albeit a conspicuous, case in a general condition. Today not even the most thoroughly educated individuals can claim to have a sound grasp of the principal branches of learning flourishing in our civilization. Ours is the age of specialization, and even within a given branch not all its practitioners can feel at home in the entire spectrum. Snow's dichotomy implies an idea of culture, not as the aggregate of all those activities that occupy an important and distinctive place in the intellectual, artistic, and professional life of our day and which in their totality constitute our culture, but rather as cold war between the new dominant superpower of science and an older, increasingly irrelevant humanistic, and specifically literary, power. Snow appears not to have been confident of educating outsiders to become scientifically literate. His solution was to urge that scientists be placed in key political positions, because they were, by the nature of their training, optimistic and "future-directed," and because they alone know enough to make those sometimes momentous decisions involving science and technology that affect the wealth and welfare of nations. Snow did not take account of the fact that, in the most important and urgent political debates of recent years involving science, a major difficulty has been that scientists of equal distinction and accomplishment have been in disagreement—for instance, about the feasibility of the fusion bomb. And he seems also to have been indifferent to the consequences of identifying scientists with great political power. Scientists are now generally regarded with respect and even awe. In Snow's scientific utopia they would in time become envied, suspected, feared, and finally hated. Inherent in Snow's argument is the increasing estrangement of science.

The courses proposed by Bernstein are designed to counteract the tendency toward isolation and polarization inherent in the present state of advanced learning, especially in the case of science, and they would therefore recommend themselves to most educators. Bernstein begins with the assumption that many non-scientists have a genuine desire to learn about science, but he selects topics for the units of study related to "technological bewilderment" and "technological necessity." Most scientists like to distinguish between their aims as pure scientists and the applications of

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science in technology, but Bernstein is probably right that the prevailing fascination and involvement with technology is the best source for engaging the interest of the student and providing the incentive for him to enter into areas that might appear intimidating and beyond his powers. The method in Bernstein's courses is disciplined and analytical, and an investigation that might begin with technology leads inevitably to science.

Such study, Bernstein believes, will also make non-scientists more comfortable with the technology that impinges on their lives because they will have an idea of how it works. This seems to me an advantage of secondary importance. Familiarity with the technology around us through use or daily contact is what removes the sense of mystery, even if it does not bring with it technical knowledge. Only when the products of science appear to be clearly beyond the capacity of most of us ever to control does the sense of mystery and fear remain. It has been said that atomic energy is feared because people do not understand it. In an important sense they understand it all too well. They may never be able to comprehend the astonishing achievement represented in $e=mc^2$, but they have seen, over and over again, the image of its consequences as a power in the hands of science in the mushroom cloud rising in apocalyptical splendor over Hiroshima. One of the merits, in fact, of some of the proposed courses is that the comprehensive analysis of any technological effort that affects society in a significant way leads not only to abstract science but ultimately to moral and prudential considerations, in which the training of the scientist gives him no special advantage over the politician who must decide or the average serious citizen.

Students exposed to such courses will be more confident of their ability to pursue on their own further knowledge and understanding of the scientific enterprise, but the ultimate goal must in the end elude them. They will lack the sense of familiarity with the nature and content of modern science that scientists share among themselves, and so they will never be quite at home with that distinctive group without whose discoveries and influence it is impossible to describe adequately the kind of intellectual world we live in. The door to which most of their efforts have directed them reads, No Admission. A course proposed by James Conant for non-scientists, Tactics and Strategies in Science, stopped short of the twentieth century: "I can't even give a decent hint about it," he wrote. "You'll have to take it on faith." Between the initiates and ourselves there is only, as Oppenheimer put it, "such communication as is mediated by earlier or later education, by friendship, by patience and the best of good will." We gladly accept what these can give, but Oppenheimer's concluding line expresses our feelings: "That is why the core of our cognitive life has this sense of emptiness." For much from which we feel excluded in the advanced intellectual life of our times, and most of all in science, we have to resign ourselves, like the inhabitants of Plato's cave, to looking at shadows, grateful when some Socrates returns, a bit dazed, to try to give us some idea of where he has been.

Moody E. Prior
Chicago, Illinois

The Story of the Stories

In my review of Dan Jacobson's *The Story of the Stories: The Chosen People and Its God* (Spring 1983), I regret to report the following error: On page 262, instead of reading "Judah Halevi (circa 1075–1141)," please read "Saadya Gaon (882–942)."

Judah Goldin
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Vanquished and Their Prey

My fellow Californian Eugen Weber is an expert on French history. He likes France. Perhaps he loves it. In the bulk of his essay about Vichy and the Jews, "The Vanquished and Their Prey" (Winter 1982/83), he maintains a fine objectivity, reminding us that Britain and the United States and other countries did far less than they might have—and should have—for the menaced Jews of Europe.

I object, however, to the first and last paragraphs of Professor Weber's essay. Let's start with the latter. He quotes someone (who?) saying "about Marc Bloch, the great historian who died in the Resistance, denounced by a Frenchwoman: 'He was a Jew much attached to France. The question is whether France deserved him.'" Reply of one person: "Maybe as much as Germany deserved Ranke or tsarist Russia deserved Tolstoy . . . or the United States deserves Eugen Weber."

The opening paragraph quotes Kenneth Clark as having found "everyone in Paris" very jolly in the spring of 1940, with Clark then furnishing the key: "The French were not going to fight." Certainly a dogmatic statement about "The French." I know—and Eugen Weber probably knows—about specific people who died fighting for France between May 10, 1940, and Pétain's armistice. It's not easy to counter Blitzkrieg with your aviation badly mauled on the opening day. A lot of territory was lost by the Soviet Union in the six weeks after the June 1941 attack . . . or by us and the Dutch and British in the six weeks after Pearl Harbor.

Subsequently Clark quotes André Maurois saying that Britain's obstinacy in fighting on "was an insult

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to France, a menace to Europe and a crime against history. . . ." Perhaps Maurois said that. Perhaps Clark is quoting inaccurately. I, for one, would for the moment give the Jewish-born, pro-English, and exiled Maurois the benefit of the doubt. Weber himself, after giving that startling (unverified?) statement, is careful to say: "*some* [my emphasis] of the French—or, at least, the Vichy regime—set out to recoup themselves by fighting the Jews." Broad generalizations about the French seem dangerous to me, and in fact, they seem dangerous to Eugen Weber too. I regret what I consider to be two exceptions.

BERNARD SINSHEIMER
Boulogne, France

The Case for Mortality

"The Case for Mortality" by Dr. Leon R. Kass, in the Spring 1983 SCHOLAR, was outstanding. Such rigorous structuring and arranging of imaginative ideas, such lucidity and grace in expression, such breadth of understanding is seldom found in magazine literature! Dr. Kass should be congratulated.

I have doubts only about what is said in the last paragraph on page 190. Dr. Kass notes that those who age (I am 77) "cease to look upon the world with fresh eyes" and that having "seen it all," we become "small-souled" and are "humbled not by bodily decline and not by 'the system' but by life itself." I should be fatuous to deny that this happens to many of the aging; but Dr. Kass paints with too broad a brush. Aging and circumstance affect individuals in different ways. Some of my contemporaries have deteriorated into utter resignation; some are afflicted with galloping cynicism; some are more alert, observing, understanding, and wiser than they had ever been in their salad days. The last group does not depend upon written history or filmed documentaries to appraise the significance of what occurs in the society today. Their standard of judgment (even conceding that facts are never exactly the same as they occurred in the past) is their personal experience. Such experience is frequently misinterpreted and misapplied; but it is not to be compared with vicarious experience. Those who were adults when thousands who had signed the Oxford Oath nevertheless rushed to arms in World War II, in the defense of Britain, might take a different view of unilateral nuclear disarmament, for example, from those who may (or may not) have read of the ill-conceived resolution adopted by the Oxford Union.

This is not to say that it would be better if the affairs of the world were administered by a coterie of Nestors! God forbid! All I mean to say is that as fresh and clear-eyed as the younger generations may be, they have no monoply of judgment. There *are* fools who are comparable to old fools! Dr. Kass's paragraph suggests to me his belief that the learning process, in the course of a lifetime, has not enriched those aged who are still in possession of their marbles. I doubt that it was his purpose to convey that impression.

PETER SEITZ
New York, New York

Mark Pattison

Professor Anthony Grafton's main contention in his interesting article about Mark Pattison (Spring 1983) is certainly correct; Pattison did not himself attain to the practice of the kind of high scholarship that he admired in Germany in men like his friend Jacob Bernays and that he sought to domicile in his own country. Professor Grafton ascribes this failure not to technical limitations, but to worldly ambition; Pattison, he tells us, "wrote for money and applause rather than to win a chair or contribute to knowledge." Here I must differ from Professor Grafton.

Pattison came to admire German scholarship too late, only during the sojourn in Germany that followed his failure to obtain the headship of his college in 1851, when he was thirty-eight years old. He was, as Professor Grafton himself points out, rooted in the world of his old-fashioned English culture and education; also, the scars left by his passionate acceptance and later passionate rejection of the influence of Newman and the movement toward Catholicism always remained with him. Pattison was not merely a scholar, but a kind of artist; and the art to which he tended was that of autobiography; when he wrote other men's lives, they invariably assumed the pattern of his own. Milton, after the disappointment of his worldly hopes and ambitions at the Restoration, takes refuge in the world of his poetry, just as Pattison takes refuge from academic and religious disappointment in the world of pure learning. Just so Pattison's life of Casaubon tells us little about the nature of Casaubon's scholarship, partly because Pattison was a good deal less technically proficient than Professor Grafton would have us think, but partly because the biographer's chief interest is in Casaubon's struggle against the pressure of Catholicism on the one hand and Calvinism on the other and his escape to the *via media* of the Church of England and the life of pure scholarship.

But for learned men to write in literary quarterlies is not altogether a bad thing, as Professor Grafton's article itself reminds us; and by doing what he was able to do, Pattison did a great deal of

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good. He had a vision of disinterested learning and the life of scholarship which he was well able to communicate to others; and though he himself never entered into the promised land of modern scientific scholarship, he made it possible for such a man as Bywater to do so. To say that he wrote for money is most unfair.

Professor Grafton's reference to "Jebb's efforts to rewrite classical texts in defiance of the documentary evidence" does a gross injustice to a scholar whom no one can accuse of rashness in emendation. Max Müller was not a "major scholar," though he was widely believed to be one, and it is not true that he found "little preferment"; after Monier Williams, a rival with a strong claim, had been preferred to him for the Chair of Sanskrit, his liberal friends managed to create for him a Chair of Comparative Philology, a field in which he was by no means expert. As for Sir James Murray, the Oxford Press published his dictionary, and there is little point in claiming that he found "little preferment," for as a professor he could not have carried on his work.

Let me add in a postscript the warning that readers of the article about E. K. Rand that you published last year ("Edward Kennard Rand" by Arthur F. Stocker, Winter 1982/83) should hesitate to accept the somewhat rosy view that it contains of the beginnings of the Harvard edition of Servius till they have read the famous review in which Eduard Fraenkel exposed its numerous deficiencies; it is reprinted in the second volume of Fraenkel's *Kleine Beiträge zur Altertumswissenschaft*.

HUGH LLOYD-JONES
Christ Church, Oxford

ANTHONY GRAFTON replies: My thanks to Hugh Lloyd-Jones for his eloquent letter. His remarks on Pattison's peculiar artistry are very helpful. And he is right to castigate my one sentence about Richard Jebb. I meant only to summarize Pattison's reaction to Jebb's early edition of Theophrastus's *Characters*—a strongly negative one, which found expression in a paper that Pattison read to the Oxford Philological Society. Had Pattison lived long enough to appreciate Jebb's great Sophocles he would certainly have revised his opinion. My apologies to Jebb's ghost.

On the other points that Professor Lloyd-Jones raises I find myself unable to agree with him—though I recognize the perils involved in disputing the history of Oxford scholarship with one of its distinguished practitioners. To take the more general point first: I cannot agree that Oxford offered adequate official preferment to her best scholars in Pattison's time. We now know that Max Müller wove too rich a thread of fanciful conjecture into his scholarly work. But most of his contemporaries—as Professor Lloyd-Jones admits—took his erudition and his theories quite seriously; and yet Müller's reward was a makeshift chair and a low salary. James Murray, as readers of K. M. Elisabeth Murray's *Caught in the Web of Words* will recall, found channels of support closed to him in a number of colleges as well as in the university. And I suspect that the rich work on nineteenth-century Oxford now being done for the official history of the university will confirm the normality of the cases I cited.

Professor Lloyd-Jones's assessment of Pattison is, I agree, perfectly valid as a treatment of the published work. But the Pattison MSS on which my essay was based give quite a different impression of the man. In estimating his technical proficiency as a scholar, I used his notebooks, many of which deal with areas in which I have done research. Careful study left me certain that Pattison could have treated the details of a Casaubon's or a Scaliger's scholarship with competence and accuracy, if not at Jebb's or Housman's level of insight. In reconstructing his goals as a writer, similarly, I drew on his letters as well as on his *Autobiography*. A review of my notes leaves me convinced that my use of these materials was fair and accurate. It is fair to point out that Pattison was an artist. But the artist whose subject is scholarship must labor under special constraints, especially when he himself claims, as Pattison did, to be a serious scholar. Pattison could have made the fruits of his research available had he had the will to write for a more circumscribed public. In trying to make the history of scholarship vivid and attractive, Pattison drained it of much—though certainly not all—of its proper content.

When I wrote that Pattison sought money and reputation, I intended to describe his motives, not to denigrate his character. When I regretted his desire always to address a large public, I did not mean to suggest that technical specialists are the only audience for whom scholars should write or that technical journals and monographs are the only medium they should employ. But I continue to feel that Pattison's vision of writing did not complement but contradicted his vision of research. I continue to find it mystifying that he did not simply pay for the privilege of printing whatever he liked (perhaps his well-known, pathological fear of poverty is relevant here). And I continue to feel that his lifelong feelings of inadequacy and frustration stemmed in no small part from the limitations that he imposed upon his work.

Pattison badly needs a full and profound intellectual biography. Should such a book appear and bring new evidence into play, I would be quite willing to revise my views. In the absence of new facts or texts, I do not feel compelled to do so. I do, however, feel compelled to thank Professor Lloyd-Jones once again for his stimulating remarks.

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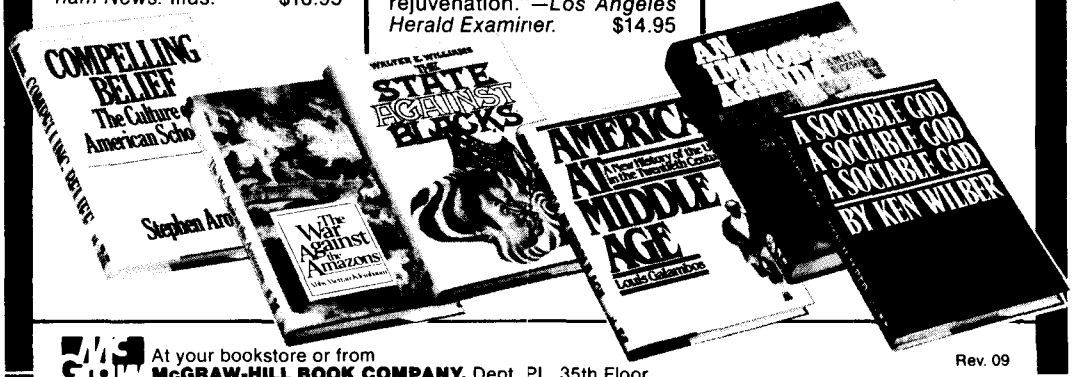

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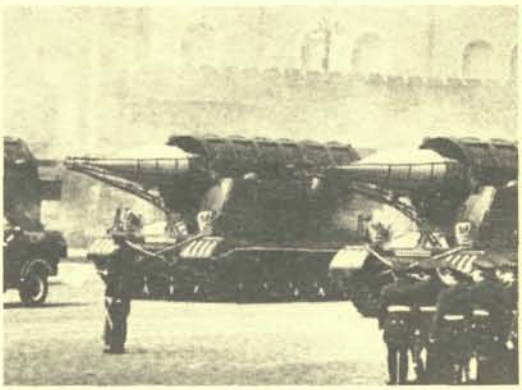

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